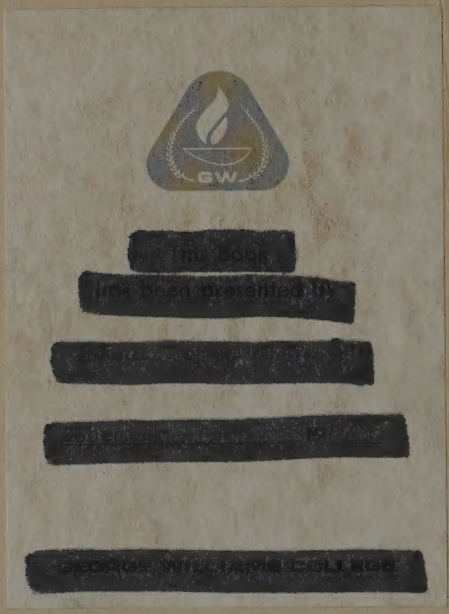

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THE LIFE OF MRS. HUMPHRY WARD



MARY WARD AT THE AGE OF TWENTY FIVE

FROM A WATER-COLOUR PAINTING BY MRS. A.H. JOHNSON

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1923

THE LIFE OF MRS. HUMPHRY WARD

BY HER DAUGHTER

JANET PENROSE TREVELYAN

Author of
"A Short History of the Italian People"

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NEW YORK
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1923

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TO

DOROTHY MARY WARD

AUTHOR'S NOTE

MY warmest thanks are due to the many friends who have helped me, directly or indirectly, in the writing of this book, but especially to all those who have sent me the letters they possessed from Mrs. Ward, or who have given me leave to publish their own. Mr. Henry Gladstone kindly looked out for me the letters written by Mrs. Ward to Mr. Gladstone during the *Robert Elsmere* period; Mrs. Creighton did the same for the long period covered by Mrs. Ward's correspondence with the Bishop and with herself; Miss Arnold of Fox How sent me many valuable letters belonging to the later years. So with Mrs. A. H. Johnson, Mrs. Conybeare, Mrs. R. Vere O'Brien, Sir Robert Blair, Mr. Leonard Huxley, Mrs. Reginald Smith, Lord Buxton, M. Chevrillon, Miss McKee, Mrs. Turner, Miss Gertrude Wood, and many others, and although the letters may not in all cases have been suitable for publication, they have given me many valuable side-lights on Mrs. Ward's life and work.

To Mrs. A. H. Johnson my special thanks are due for permission to reproduce her water-colour portrait of Mrs. Ward, and to Mrs. T. H. Green for much help in connexion with the Oxford portion of the book.

No book at all, however, could have been produced, even from the material so generously placed at my disposal, had it not been for the constant collaboration of my father and sister, whose help in sifting great masses of papers and in advising me in all difficulties has been my greatest support throughout this task.

J. P. T.

BERKHAMSTED,
July, 1923.

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CHAPTER I

CHILDHOOD

1851–1867

IS the study of heredity a science or a pure romance? For the unlearned at least I like to think it is the latter, since no law that the Professors ever formulated can explain the caprices of each little human soul, bobbing up like a coracle over life's horizon and bringing with it things gathered at random from an infinitely remote and varying ancestry. It is, I believe, generally known that the subject of this biography was a granddaughter of Arnold of Rugby, and therewith her intellectual ability and the force of her character are thought to be sufficiently explained. But what of her mother, the beautiful Julia Sorell, of whom her sad husband said at her death that she had "the nature of a queen," ever thwarted and rebuffed by circumstance? What of the strain of Spanish Protestant blood that ran in the veins of the Sorells: for although they were refugees from France after the Edict of Nantes, it is most probable that they came of Spanish origin? What of the strain brought in by the wild and forcible Kemps of Mount Vernon in Tasmania? A daughter of Anthony Fenn Kemp (himself a "character" of a remarkable kind) married William Sorell and so became the mother of Julia and the grandmother of Mary Arnold; but the principal fact that is known of her is that she deserted her three daughters after bringing them to England for their education, went off with an army officer and was hardly heard of more. An ungovernable temper seems to have marked most of this family, and the recollections of her childhood were so terrible to Julia Sorell that she wrote in after years to her husband, "Few families have been blessed with such a home training as yours, and certainly

very few in our rank of life have been cursed with such as mine." Yet although Julia inherited much of this violence and passion, to her own constant misery, she had also "the nature of a queen," and transmitted it in no small degree to her daughter Mary.

The Sorells were descended from Colonel William Sorell, one of the early Governors of Tasmania, who had been appointed to the post in 1816. Nine years before, on his appointment as Adjutant-General at the Cape of Good Hope, this Colonel Sorell had left behind him in England a woman to whom he was legally married and by whom he had had several children, but whom he never saw again after leaving these shores. He occupied himself, indeed, with another lady, while the unfortunate wife at home struggled to maintain his children on the very inadequate allowance which he had granted her. Twice the allowance lapsed, with calamitous results for the wife and children, and it was only on the active intervention of Lord Bathurst, Secretary of State for War and the Colonies, that the payment of her quarterly instalments was resumed in 1818. Meanwhile, her eldest son William, a steady, hard-working lad, had been trying to support the family from his own earnings of 12*s.* a week, and when he grew to man's estate he applied to Lord Bathurst for permission to join his father in Van Diemen's Land, hoping that so he might help to reconcile his parents. Lord Bathurst gave him his passage out, but had in fact already decided to recall Governor Sorell, so that when young Sorell arrived at Hobart Town early in 1824 he found his father only awaiting the arrival of his successor (the well-known Colonel Arthur), before quitting the Colony for good. William, however, decided to remain there, accepted the position of Registrar of Deeds from Colonel Arthur, and made his permanent home in the island. He married the head-strong Miss Kemp, and in his sad after-life suffered a reversal of the parts played by his own father and mother. Long after his wife had deserted him he lived on in Hobart Town, much respècted and beloved, and remembered by his grand-daughter as a "gentle, affectionate, upright being, a gentleman of an old, punctilious school, content with a small sphere and much loved within it."

His daughter Julia grew up as the favourite and pet of Hobart Town society, much admired by the subalterns of

the solitary battalion of British troops that maintained our prestige among the convicts and the "blacks" of that remote settlement. But for her Fate held other things in store. Early in 1850 there appeared at Hobart Town a young man of twenty-six, tall and romantic-looking, who bore a name well known even in the southern seas—the name of Thomas Arnold. He was the second son of Dr. Arnold of Rugby. He had left the Old World for the Newest three years before on a genuine quest for the ideal life; had tried farming in New Zealand, but in vain, and had then, after some adventures in schoolmastering, come to Tasmania at the invitation of the Governor, Sir William Denison, to organize the public education of the Colony. Fortune seemed to smile upon the young Inspector of Schools, who as a first-classman and an Arnold found a kind and ready welcome from those who reigned in Tasmania, and when he met Julia Sorell a few weeks after he landed and fell in love with her at first sight, no obstacles were placed in his way. They were married on June 12, 1850—a love-match if ever there was one, but a match that was too soon to be subjected to that most fiery test of all, a religious struggle of the deepest and most formidable kind.

Thomas Arnold came of a family to whom religion was always a "concern," as the Quakers call it; whether it was the great Doctor, with his making of "Christian gentlemen" at Rugby and his fierce polemics against the "Oxford malignants," or Matt, with his "Power, not ourselves, that makes for righteousness," or William (a younger brother), with his religious novel, *Oakfield*, about the temptations of Indian Army life; and Thomas was by no means exempt from the tradition. A sentimental idealist by nature, he was a friend of Clough and had already been immortalized as "Philip" in the *Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich.*[1] He came

[1] The following is a letter written long afterwards by Tom Arnold to his sister Fan, with reference to Clough: "I loved him, oh! so well: and also respected him more profoundly than any man, anywhere near my own age, whom I ever met. His pure soul was without stain: he seemed incapable of being inflamed by wrath, or tempted to vice, or enslaved by any unworthy passion of any sort. As to 'Philip' something that he saw in me helped to suggest the character, that was all. There is much in Philip that is Clough himself and there is a dialectic force in him that certainly was never in me."

December 21, 1895.

now to the Antipodes in rationalistic mood and in search of the nobler, freer life ; but soon the old beliefs reasserted themselves, yet brought no peace. His mind was " hot for certainties in this our life," and he had not been five years in Tasmania before he was seeing much of a certain Catholic priest and feeling himself strongly drawn towards the ancient fold. His poor wife, in whom her Huguenot ancestry had bred an instinctive and invincible loathing for Catholicism, felt herself overtaken by a kind of black doom ; she made wild threats of leaving him, she shuddered at the thought of what might happen to the children. Yet nothing that she or any of his friends could say might avert the fatal step. Tom Arnold was received into the Roman Catholic Church at Hobart Town on January 12, 1856.

His prospects immediately darkened, for feeling ran high in the Colony against Popery, and it soon became clear that he must give up his appointment and return to England. Already three children had been born to him and Julia, but the young wife was now plunged in preparations for the uprooting of her household and the transport of the whole family across the globe, to an unknown future and a world of unknown faces. The voyage was accomplished in a sailing-ship of 400 tons, the *William Brown*, so overrun by rats that the mother and nurse had to take turns to watch over the children at night, lest their faces should be bitten ; but after more than three months of this existence the ship did finally reach English waters and cast anchor in the Thames on October 17, 1856. It was wet autumn weather and the little family huddled forlornly in a small inn in Thames Street, but the next day a deliverer appeared in the person of William Forster (the future Education Minister), who had married Tom's eldest sister Jane a few years before and who now carried off the whole family to better quarters in London, helped them in the kindest way and finally saw off the mother and children to the friendly shelter of Fox How—that beloved home among the Westmorland hills which " the Doctor " had built to house his growing family and which was now to play so great a part in the development of his latest descendant, the little Mary Arnold.

Mary Augusta had been born at Hobart Town on June 11, 1851. She was, of course, the apple of her parents' eyes,

and the descriptions which her father wrote of her, in the long letters that went home to his mother at Fox How by every available boat, give a curiously vivid picture of a little creature richly endowed with fairy gifts, but above all with the crowning gift of *life*. At first she is a "pretty little creature, with a compact little face, good features and an uncommonly large forehead"; then at eight months, "If you could but see our darling Mary! The vigour of life, the animation, the activity of eye and hand that she displays are astonishing. Her brown hair in its abundance is the admiration of everybody." At a year old she is "passionate but not peevish, sensitive to the least harshness in word or gesture, but usually full of merriment and gladsomeness. She is like a sparkling fountain or a gay flower in the house, filling it with light and freshness." She has many childish ailments, but conquers them all in a manner strangely prophetic of her later power of resisting illness. "I fear you will think she must be a very sickly child," writes her father, "and she certainly is delicate and easily put out of order; but I have much faith in the strength of her constitution, for in all her ailments she has seemed to have a power of battling against them, a vitality that pulls her through." As a little thing of under two her feelings are terribly easily worked upon: "The other evening it was raining very hard and I began to talk to her about the poor people out in the rain who were getting wet and had no warm fire to sit by and no nice dry clothes to put on. You cannot imagine how this touched her. She kept on repeating over and over again, 'Poor people! Poor people! Out in the rain! Get warm! get warm!'" But as she grows bigger she develops a will of her own that sorely troubles her father, beset with all the ideas of his generation about "prompt obedience"; at three and a half he writes: "Little Polly is as imitative as a monkey and as mischievous; self-willed and resolute to take the lead and have her own way, whenever her companions are anything approaching to her own age. Not a very easy character to manage as you will see, yet often to be led through her feelings, when it would be difficult to drive her in defiance of her will." Soon he is having "a regular pitched battle with her about once a day," and writes ruefully home—as though he were having the worst of it—

that Polly is "kind enough where she can patronize, but her domineering spirit makes even her kindness partake of oppression." Two little brothers, Willie and Theodore, had already been added to the family by the time they made the voyage home—playthings whom Mary alternately slapped and cuddled and in whom she took an immense pride of possession. They were the first of a long series of brothers and sisters to whom her kindness, in after years, was certainly not of the kind that "partakes of oppression."

Thus, at the age of five, this little spirit, passionate, self-willed and tender-hearted, came within the direct orbit of the Arnold family. During most of the four years that followed their arrival she was either staying with her grandmother, the Doctor's widow, at Fox How, or else living as a boarder at Miss Clough's little school at Eller How, near Ambleside, and spending her Saturdays at Fox How. Her father meanwhile took work under Newman in Dublin and earned a precarious subsistence for his wife and family by teaching at the Catholic University there. They were times of hardship and privation for Julia, who never ceased to be in love with Tom and never ceased to curse the day of his conversion; and as the babies increased and the income did not she was fain to allow her eldest daughter to live more and more with the kind grandmother, who asked no better than to have the child about the house. And, indeed, to have this particular child about the house was not always a light undertaking! She was wonderfully quick, clever and affectionate, but her tempers sometimes shook her to pieces in storms of passion, and the devoted "Aunt Fan," the Doctor's youngest daughter, who lived with her mother at Fox How, was often sorely puzzled how to deal with her. Still, by a judicious mixture of severity and tenderness she won the child's affection, so that Mary was wont to say, looking slyly at her aunt, "I like Aunt Fan—she's the master of me!"

The Arnold atmosphere made indeed a very remarkable influence for any impressionable child of Mary's age to live in; it supplied a deep-rooted sense of calm and balance, an unalterable family affection and a sad disapproval of tempers and excesses of all kinds which, as time went on, had a marked effect on the Tasmanian child. From a Sorell by birth and temperament, as I believe she was, she

gradually became an Arnold by environment. If she inherited from her mother those wilder springs of energy and courage which impelled her, like some dæmon within, to be up and doing in life's race, it was from the Arnolds that she learnt the art of living, the art of harnessing the dæmon. They certainly made a memorable group, the nine sons and daughters of Arnold of Rugby: all of whom, except Fan, the youngest daughter, were scattered from the nest by the time that "little Polly" came to Fox How, but all of whom maintained for each other and for their mother the tenderest affection, so that life at the Westmorland home was continually crossed and re-crossed by their visits and their letters. In looking through these faded letters the reader of to-day is struck by their seriousness and simplicity of tone, by the intense family affection they display and by the very real relation in which the writers stood towards the "indwelling presence of God." Hardly a member of the family can be mentioned without the prefix "dear" or "dearest," nor can anyone who is acquainted with the Arnold temperament doubt that this was genuine. Birthdays are made the occasion for rather solemn words of love or exhortation, and if any sorrow strikes the family one may expect without fail to find a complete reliance on the accustomed sources of consolation. Yet they are not prigs, these brothers and sisters; their roots strike deep down to the bed-rock of life, and though they are all (except poor Tom) in fairly prosperous circumstances, they can be generous and open-handed to those who are less so. Tom was, I think, the special darling of the family, and his lapse to Catholicism a terrible trial to them, but none the less did they labour for Tom's children in all simplicity of heart.

The daughter who, next to "Aunt Fan," had most to do with little Mary was Jane, the wife of William Forster; Mary was her godchild, and soon conceived a kind of passion for this sweet-faced woman of thirty-five, who, childless herself, returned the little girl's affection in no ordinary degree. Mary would sometimes go to stay with her at Burley-in-Wharfedale, where she looked with awe at the "great wheels" in Uncle Forster's woollen mill and saw the children working there—children untouched as yet by their master's schemes for their welfare, or by the still

remoter visions of their small observer. Then there was Matt—Matt the sad poet and gay man of the world, who brought with him on his rarer visits to Fox How the breath of London and of great affairs, for was he not, in his sisters' eyes at least, the spoilt darling of society, the diner-out, the frequenter of great houses? He looked, we know, with unusual interest upon Tom's Polly, and in later years was wont to say, with his whimsical smile, that she "got her ability from her mother." Another aunt to whom the Tasmanian child became much devoted was her namesake Mary, at that time Mrs. Hiley, a woman whose rich, responsive nature and keen sense of humour endeared her greatly to the few friends who knew her well, and whose early rebellions and idealisms had given her a most human personality. It was she among all the group who understood and sympathized most keenly with Tom's wife, so that between Julia and Mary Hiley a bond was forged that ended only with the former's death. Poor Julia! The Arnold atmosphere was indeed sometimes a formidable one, and had little sympathy to give to her own undisciplined and tempestuous nature, with its strange deeps of feeling. Julia's temptations—to extravagance in money matters and to passionate outbursts of temper—were not Arnold temptations, and she often felt herself disapproved of in spite of much outward affection and kindness. And then she would have morbid reactions in which the old Calvinistic hell-fire of her forefathers seemed very near. Once when she was staying at Fox How, ill and depressed, she wrote to her husband: "The feeling grows upon me that I am one of those unhappy people whom *God has abandoned*, and it is the effect of this feeling I am sure which causes me to behave as I often do. Oh! it is an awful thing to *despair* about one's future state. . . . " Probably she felt that in spite of their undoubted humility, her in-laws never quite despaired about theirs.

By the time that Mary was seven years old, that is in the autumn of 1858, it was decided that she should go as a boarder to Miss Anne Clough's school at Ambleside, or rather at Eller How on the slopes of Wansfell behind the town. Here she spent two years and more—happy on the whole, often naughty and wilful, but usually held in awe by Miss Clough's stately presence and power of commanding

her small flock. There was only one other boarder besides Mary, a girl named Sophie Bellasis, whose recollections of those days were preserved and given to the world long afterwards by her husband, the late Mr. T. C. Down, in an article published by the *Cornhill Magazine*.[1] Miss Bellasis' impressions of the queer little girl, Mary Arnold, who was her fellow-boarder, make so vivid a picture that I may perhaps be forgiven for reproducing them here :

" Mary had a very decided character of her own, as well as a pretty vivid imagination, for the odd things she used to say, merely on the spur of the moment, would quite stagger me sometimes. Once when we were going along the passage upstairs leading to the schoolroom, she stopped at one of the gratings where the hot air came up from the furnace, with holes in the pattern about the size of a shilling, and told me that she knew a little boy whose head was so small that he could put it through one of those holes : and after we had gone to bed she would tell me the oddest stories in a whisper, because it was against the rules to talk. I think now that her fancy used to run riot with her, and, of course, she had to give vent to it in any way that suggested itself. But I implicitly believed whatever she chose to tell me, so that you see we both enjoyed ourselves. Her energy and high spirits were something wonderful ; out of doors she was never still, but always running or jumping or playing, and she invariably tired me out at this sort of thing. Still, nothing came amiss to her in the way of amusement ; anything that entered her head would answer the purpose, and she was never at a loss. I recollect she had a lovely doll, which her aunt, Mrs. Forster, had given her, all made of wax. Once she was annoyed with this doll for some reason or other and broke it up into little bits. We put the bits into little saucepans, and melted them over one of the gratings I told you of. Sometimes Willy Dolly (that was the name we had for the general factotum) would let the fire go down, and then the gratings were cold, and at other times he would have a roaring fire, and then they would be so hot that you couldn't touch them. So we melted the

[1] " School-days with Miss Clough." By T. C. Down. *Cornhill*, June, 1920.

wax and moulded it into dolls' puddings, and that was the last of her wax doll!

"One day we were over at Fox How, which was a pretty house, with a wide lawn and garden. One side of it was covered with a handsome Virginia creeper, which was thought a great deal of, and, of course, was not intended to be meddled with. Suddenly it occurred to Mary that it would be first-rate fun to pick 'all those red leaves,' and I obediently went and helped her. We cleared a great bare space all along the wall as high as we could reach, but from what Miss Arnold said when she came out and discovered what was done, I gathered that she was not so pleased with our work as we were ourselves."

It was during these years, from six to nine, that the foundation was laid of that passionate adoration for the fells, with their streams, bogs and stone walls, which became one of Mary's most intimate possessions and never deserted her in after years. In her *Recollections* she describes a walk up the valley to Sweden Bridge with her father and Arthur Clough, the two men safely engaged in grown-up talk while she, happy and alone, danced on in front or lingered behind, all eyes and ears for the stream, the birds and the wind. It was a walk of which she soon knew every inch, just as she knew every inch of the Fox How garden, and I believe that the sights and sounds of that rough northern valley came to be woven in with the very texture of her soul. They appealed to something primitive and deep-down in her little heart, some power that remained with her through life and that, as she once said to me, "stands more rubs than anything else in our equipment."

Then, when she was only nine and a half, she was transferred to a school at Shiffnal in Shropshire, kept by a certain Miss Davies, whose sister happened to be an old friend of Tom Arnold's and offered now to undertake little Mary's maintenance if she were sent to this "Rock Terrace School for Young Ladies." But the change seemed to call out all the demon in Mary's composition; she fought blindly against the restrictions and rules of this new community, felt herself at enmity with all the world and broke out ever and anon in storms of passion. In the first chapter of *Marcella* it is all described—the "sulks, quarrels and

revolts " of Marcie Boyce (*alias* Mary Arnold), the getting up at half-past six on dark winter mornings, the cold ablutions and dreary meals, and the occasional days in bed with senna-tea and gruel when Miss Davies (at her wits' end, poor lady !) would try the method of seclusion as a cure for Mary's tantrums. The poor little thing suffered cruelly from headaches and bad colds, and laboured too under a sore sense of poverty and disadvantage as compared with the other girls ; she was, in fact, paid for at a lower rate than most of the other boarders, and was not allowed to forget it. Often she writes home to beg for stamps, and once she says to her father : " Do send me some more money. It was so tantalizing this morning, a woman came to the door with twopenny baskets, so nice, and many of the other girls got them and I couldn't." Another time she begs him to send her the threepence that she has " earned," by writing out some lists of names for him. But on Saturdays she had one joy, fiercely looked forward to all the week ; a " cake-woman " came to the school, and by hoarding up her tiny weekly allowance she was able—usually—to buy a three-cornered jam puff. To a rather starved and very lonely little girl of nine or ten this was—she often said to us afterwards—the purest consolation of the week.

But there were some compensations even in these unlovely surroundings. The nice old German governess, Fräulein Gerecke, was always kind to her, and tried in little unobtrusive ways to ease the lot which Mary found so hard to bear. Once she made for her, surreptitiously, a white muslin frock with blue ribbons and laid it on her bed in time for some little function of the school for which Mary had received no " party frock " from home. A gush of hot tears was the response, tears partly of gratitude, partly of soreness at the need for it ; but the muslin frock was worn nevertheless, and entered from that moment into the substance of the day-dreams and stories that she was for ever telling herself. Any child who has a faculty for it will understand how great a consolation were these self-told stories, in which she rioted especially on days of senna-tea and gruel. Tales of the Princess of Wales and how she, Mary, herself succeeded in stopping her runaway horses, with the divinity's pale agitation and gratitude, filled the long hours, and the muslin frock usually came into the story

when Mary made her trembling appearance "by command" at the palace afterwards. Gradually, too, these tales came to weave themselves round more accessible mortals, for Mary's heart and affections were waking up and she did not escape, any more than the modern schoolgirl, her share of "adorations." At twelve years old she fell headlong in love with the Vicar of Shiffnal and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Cunliffe; going to church—especially in the evenings, when the Vicar preached—became a romance; seeing Mrs. Cunliffe pass by in her pony-carriage lent a radiance to the day. The Vicar's wife, a gentle Evangelical, felt genuinely drawn towards the untamed little being and did her best to guide the wayward footsteps, while Mary on her side wrote poems to her idol, keeping them fortunately locked within her desk, and let her fancy run from ecstasy to ecstasy in the dreams that she wove around her. What "dauntless child" among us does not know these splendours, and the transforming effect that they have upon the prickly hide of youth? Little Mary Arnold was destined to leave her mark upon the world, partly by power of brain, but more by sheer power of love, and the first human beings to unlock the unguessed stores of it within her were these two kindly Evangelicals.

Still, the demon was not quite exorcised, and "Aunt Fan" still found Mary something of a handful when she stayed at Fox How, though now in a different way.

> "She seems to me very much wanting in *humility*," she writes in January, 1864, "which, with the knowledge she must have of her own abilities, is not perhaps wonderful, but it is ungraceful to hear her expressing strong opinions and holding her own, against elder people, without certainly much sense of reverence. One thing, however I will mention to show her desire to conquer herself. She had no gloves to go to Ellergreen, and I objected to buying her kid, but got her such as I wear myself, very nice cloth. She vowed and protested she couldn't and shouldn't wear them, so I said I should not make her, but if she wanted kid, she must buy them with her own money. I talked quietly to her about it and said how pleased I should be if she conquered this whim, and when she came to say good-bye to me before starting for Ellergreen her last words were—'I am going to put on the gloves, Auntie!'—

and she has worn them ever since, though I must say with some grumblings!"

She stayed for four years at Miss Davies's, during which time her parents moved (in 1862) from Dublin to Birmingham, where Tom Arnold was offered work under Newman at the Oratory School. The change brought a small increase in salary, but not enough to cover the needs of the still growing family, and if it had not been for the help freely given during these years by W. E. Forster, the struggling pair must almost have gone down under their difficulties. One result of the change was that the elder boys, Willie and Theodore, were themselves sent to the Oratory School, and the thought of Arnold of Rugby's grandsons being pupils of Newman gave rise to bitter reflections at Fox How. "I was very glad to hear of Willy's having done so well in the examination of his class," wrote Julia to her husband from the family home, "although I must confess the thought of *our son* being examined by Dr. Newman had carried a pang to my heart. Your mother I found felt it in the same way; she said (when I read out to her that part of your letter) with her eyes full of tears, 'Oh! to think of *his* grandson, *dearest Tom's son*, being examined by Dr. Newman!'" Still, Julia was emphatically of opinion that if priests were to have a hand in their education at all, she would rather it were English than Irish priests.[1]

Meanwhile, the shortcomings of the school at Shiffnal were becoming evident to Mary's mother, and in the winter of 1864–5 she succeeded in arranging that the child should be sent instead to another near Clifton, kept by a certain Miss May, which was smaller and also more expensive than Miss Davies's. Heaven knows how the payments were managed, but the change answered extremely well, for after the first term Mary settled down in complete happiness and soon developed such a devotion to Miss May as made short work of her remaining tendencies to temper and "contrariness." Miss May must have been exactly the type of schoolmistress that Mary needed at this stage—kind and

[1] According to the universal understanding of those days, in the case of a mixed marriage the boys followed the father's faith and the girls the mother's. Tom Arnold's boys were, therefore, brought up as Catholics until their father's reversion to Anglicanism in 1864.

large-hearted, with the understanding necessary to win the confidence of such an uncommon little creature—so that it was not long before the child's mind began to expand in every direction. Long afterwards she was wont to say that the actual knowledge she acquired at school was worth next to nothing—that she learnt no subject thoroughly and left school without any "edged tools." But certainly by the time she was twelve she could write a French letter such as not many of us could produce with all our advantages, while the drawing and music that she learnt at school encouraged certain natural talents in her that were to give her some of the purest joys of her after-life. Still, no doubt her mind received no systematic training, and at Miss Davies's I believe that *Mangnall's Questions* were still the common textbook! Though she learnt a little German and Latin she always said that she had them to do all over again when she needed them later for her work, while Greek, which became the joy and consolation of her later years, was entirely a "grown-up" acquisition. But whatever the imperfections of her nine years of school, better times were at hand both for Mary and her mother.

Whether it was that after two or three years of the Birmingham Oratory, Tom Arnold's political radicalism (always a sturdy growth) began to make him uneasy at the proceedings of Pio Nono—for 1864 was the year of the Encyclical—or whether it was more particularly the Mortara case, as he says in his autobiography,[1] at any rate his feeling towards the Catholic Church had grown distinctly cool by the end of that year, and he was meditating leaving the Oratory. Gradually the rumour spread among his friends that Tom Arnold was turning against Rome, and in June, 1865, a paragraph to this effect appeared in the papers. Little Mary, now a girl of fourteen, heard the news while she was at Miss May's, and wrote in ecstasy to her mother:

> "My precious Mother, I have indeed seen the paragraphs about Papa. The L's showed them me on Saturday. You can imagine the excitement I was in on Saturday night, not knowing whether it was true or not. Your letter confirmed it this morning and Miss May, seeing I suppose that I looked rather faint, sent me on a pretended errand

[1] *Passages in a Wandering Life* (T. Arnold), p. 185.

for her notebook to escape the breakfast-table. My darling Mother, how thankful you must be! One feels as if one could do nothing but thank Him."

Her father's change opened indeed a new and happier chapter in their lives, for it opened the road to Oxford. He had been seriously facing the possibility of a second emigration, this time to Queensland, and had been making inquiries about official work there, but his own inclinations—and, of course, Julia's too—were in favour of trying to make a living at Oxford by the taking of pupils. His old friends there encouraged him, and by the autumn of 1865 they were established in a house in St. Giles's and the venture had begun. Mary wrote in delight that winter to her dear Mrs. Cunliffe:

"Do you know that we are now living at Oxford? My father takes pupils and has a history lectureship. We are happier there than we have ever been before, I think. My father revels in the libraries, and so do I when I am at home."

A fragment of diary written in the Christmas holidays of 1865–6 reveals how much she enjoyed being taken for a grown-up young lady by Oxford friends. "Went to St. Mary Magdalen's in the morning and heard a droll sermon on Convictional Sin. Met Sir Benjamin [Brodie] coming home. Miss Arnold at home supposed to be seventeen, and Mary Arnold at school known to be fourteen are two very different things." She is absorbed in *Essays in Criticism*, but can still criticize the critic. "Read Uncle Matt's Essay on Pagan and Mediaeval Religious Sentiment. Compares the religious feeling of Pompeii and Theocritus with the religious feeling of St. Francis and the German Reformation. Contrasts the religion of sorrow as he is pleased to call Christianity with the religion of sense, giving to the former for the sake of propriety a slight pre-eminence over the latter." She does not like the famous *Preface* at all. "The *Preface* is rich and has the fault which the author professes to avoid, that of being amusing. As for the seductiveness of Oxford, its moonlight charms and Romeo and Juliet character, I think Uncle Matt is slightly inclined to ride the high horse whenever he approaches the subject."

As the eldest of eight children she led a very strenuous life at home, helping to teach the little ones and ever striving

to avoid a clash between her mother's temper and her own. The entries in the diary are often sadly self-accusing: "These last three days I have not served Christ at all. It has been nothing but self from beginning to end. Prayer seems a task and it seems as if God would not receive me."

But after another year and a half at Miss May's school these difficulties vanished, and by the time that she came to live at home altogether, in the summer of 1867, the rough edges had smoothed themselves away in marvellous fashion. She was sixteen, and the world was before her—the world of Oxford, which in spite of her criticisms of the *Preface* was indeed *her* world. Her father seemed content with his teaching work, and was planning the building of a larger house. She set to work to be happy, and so indeed did her mother—happy in a great reprieve, and in the reviving hopes of prosperity. But now and then Julia would stop suddenly in her household tasks, hearing ominous sounds from Tom's study. Was it the chanting of a Latin prayer? She put the fear behind her and passed on.

CHAPTER II

LIFE AT OXFORD

1867–1881

WHEN Tom Arnold settled with his family at Oxford, in 1865, the old University was still labouring under the repercussions, the thrills and counter-thrills, of the famous Movement set on foot in 1833 by Keble's sermon on *National Apostasy*. Keble, indeed, was withdrawn from the scene, but Newman's conversion to Rome (1845) had made so prodigious a stir that even twenty years later the religious world of England still took its colour from that event. In the words of Mark Pattison, "whereas other reactions accomplished themselves by imperceptible degrees, in 1845 the darkness was dissipated and the light was let in in an instant, as by the opening of the shutters in the chamber of a sick man who has slept till mid-day." So at least the crisis appeared to the Liberal world; the mask had been torn from the Tractarians and their Romanizing tendencies stood revealed to all beholders. In the opposite camp the consternation was proportionate, but the formidable figure of Pusey rallied the doubters and brought them back in good order to the *Via Media* of the Anglican communion; while the tender poetry of Keble and the far-famed eloquence of Liddon fortified and adorned the High Church cause. But the sudden ending of the Tractarian controversy opened the way for another movement, slower and less sensational than that of Newman, yet destined to have an even deeper effect upon the religious life of England. The freedom of the human mind began to be insisted upon, not only in the realm of science, or where science clashed with the Book of Genesis, but in the whole field of the Interpretation of Scripture. Slowly the results of fifty years of patient study

of the Bible by German scholars and historians began to penetrate here, and even Oxford, stronghold and citadel of the Laudian establishment, felt the stir of a new interest, a new challenge to accepted forms. A Liberal school of theologians arose, led by Jowett, Mark Pattison and other writers in *Essays and Reviews* (1860), for whom the old letter of "inspiration" no longer existed, though they stoutly maintained their orthodoxy as members and ministers of the Church of England. The Church, they said, must broaden her base so as to make room for the results of science and of historical criticism, or else she would be left high and dry while the forces of democracy passed on their way without her. Jowett, in his famous essay "On the Interpretation of Scripture," boldly summed up his argument in the precept, "Interpret the Scripture like any other book." "The first step is to know the meaning, and this can only be done in the same careful and impartial way that we ascertain the meaning of Sophocles or Plato." "Educated persons are beginning to ask, not what Scripture may be made to mean, but what it does mean."

The hubbub raised by these and similar expressions continued during the three years of proceedings before the Court of Arches, the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, and finally Convocation, against two of the contributors to *Essays and Reviews*, and had hardly died away when the Arnolds came to take up their life in Oxford. And side by side with the theoretical discussion went the insistent demand of the reforming party, both at Oxford and in Parliament, for the abolition of the disabilities that still weighed so heavily against Dissenters. For, although the "Oxford University Act" of 1854 had admitted them to matriculation and the B.A. degree, neither Fellowships nor the M.A. were yet open to any save subscribers to the Thirty-nine Articles. All through the 'sixties the battle raged, with an annual attempt in Parliament to break down the defence of the guardians of tradition, and not till 1871 was the "citadel taken."[1] Jowett and Arthur Stanley stood forth among the Liberal champions at Oxford—the latter reckoning himself always as carrying on the tradition of Arnold of Rugby, whose pamphlet urging the inclusion of Dissenters in the National Church had made so great a

[1] Jowett to Lewis Campbell, June, 1871.

sensation in 1833. It was hardly possible, therefore, for a little Arnold of Mary's temperament and traditions to escape the atmosphere that surrounded her so closely, though we need not imagine that at the age of sixteen she did more than imbibe it passively. But there were certain things that were not passive in her memory—visions of Dr. Newman in the streets of Edgbaston, passing gravely by upon his business—business which the child so passionately resented because she understood it to be responsible in some vague way for all the hardships and misfortunes of her family. We may safely assume that if she was ever taken into Oriel College and saw the many rows of portraits looking down at her there, in Common-room and Hall, she would feel an instinctive rallying to the standard of her grandfather rather than to that of his mighty opponent.

Two other remarkable figures who dominated the Oxford world of that day, though from opposite camps, were the silver-tongued Dr. Liddon, "Select Preacher" at the University Church, and Mark Pattison, Rector of Lincoln, whom his contemporaries looked on with awe as one of the most learned scholars in Europe in matters of pure erudition, but in religion a sad sceptic, though twenty years before, they knew, he had been a brand only barely plucked from Newman's burning. Both were to have their influence upon Mary Arnold, the former superficial, the latter deep and lasting, and it is curious to find a letter from her father, written in 1865, before he had definitely left the Catholic communion, in which he describes hearing both men preach on the same day in the University Church.

> "Pattison's sermon was certainly a most remarkable one," he writes; "I could have sat another half-hour under him with pleasure. But he has much more of the philosopher than the divine about him, and the discourse had the effect of an able article in the *National* or *Edinburgh Review*, read to a cultivated audience in the academical theatre, much more than of a sermon. In fact, the name either of Jesus Christ or of one of the Apostles was not once mentioned throughout. The subject was, the higher education; and the felicity of the language accorded well with the clearness and beauty of the thoughts. He condemned the Catholic system, and also the Positivist system, and in speaking of the former he said, 'I cannot do better

than describe it in the words of one whose voice was once wont to sound within these walls with thrilling power, but now, alas! can never more be heard by us, who in his Treatise on University Education—' and then he proceeded to quote at some length from Dr. Newman. It was an extremely powerful sermon, but scandalized, I think, the High Church and orthodox party. 'Do you often now,' I asked Edwin Palmer with a smile, meeting him outside after it was over, 'have University sermons in that style?' 'Oh dear no,' he said, 'scarcely ever, except indeed from Pattison himself'; this with some acidity of tone. I dined early; then thought I, in for a penny, in for a pound, I'll go and hear the other University sermon. I was punctual, but there was not a seat to be had, the ladies mustered in overwhelming force. It was strange, but sermon and preacher were now everything most opposite to those of the morning. Liddon is a dark, black-haired little man—short, straight, stubby hair—and with that shiny, glistening appearance about his sallow complexion which one so often sees in Dissenting ministers, and which the devotees no doubt consider a mark of election. Liddon's whole sermon was an impassioned strain of apologetic argument for the truth of the Resurrection, and of the church doctrine generally. It was very clever certainly, but rather too long, it extended to about an hour and twenty minutes. The tone was earnest and devout; yet there were several sarcastic, one might almost say irritable, flings at the liberal and rationalizing party; and it was evident that he was thinking of the Oxford congregation when he spoke pointedly of the 'educated sceptics who at that time composed, or at any rate controlled, the Sanhedrin.' These two," he continues, "were certainly sermons of more than ordinary interest—each worthily representing a great stream of thought and tendency, influential for good or evil at the present moment upon millions of human beings."

It was under such influences as these that Mary Arnold passed the four impressionable years of her girlhood, from sixteen to twenty, that elapsed between her leaving school and her engagement to Mr. Humphry Ward, of Brasenose. She plunged with zest into the Oxford life, making friends, helping her father at the Bodleian in his researches into

early English literature and studying music to very good purpose under James Taylor, the future organist of New College. But she had no further regular education, and was free to roam and devour at will in that city of books, guided only by the advice of a few friends and by her own innate literary instincts. The Mark Pattisons early befriended her, frequently asking her to supper with them on Sunday evenings—suppers at which she sat, shy and silent, in a high woollen dress, with her black, wavy hair brushed very smoothly back, listening to every word of the eager talk around her and drinking in, no doubt, the Rector's caustic remarks about Oxford scholarship. These were the years of battle between the champions of research and the champions of the Balliol ideal of turning out good men for the public service, and in her ardent admiration for the Rector Mary Arnold threw herself whole-heartedly into the former camp. "Get to the bottom of something," he used to say to her; "choose a subject and know *everything* about it!" And so she plunged into early Spanish literature and history, working at it in the Bodleian with the fervour that comes from knowing that your subject is your very own, or at least that it has only been traversed before by dear, musty German scholars. There was hard practice here in the reading of German and Latin, let alone the Spanish poems and chronicles themselves, but after a couple of years of it there was little she did not know about the *Poema del Cid*, or the Visigothic invasion, or the reign of *Alfonso el Sabio*. Her friend, J. R. Green, the historian, was so much impressed with her work that he recommended her when she was only twenty to Edward Freeman as the best person he could suggest for writing a volume on Spain in an historical series that the latter was editing. Mr. Freeman duly invited her, but by that time she was already deep in the preparations for her marriage and was obliged to decline the offer. She maintained her allegiance to the subject, however, through all the years that followed, until, as will be seen hereafter, Dean Wace made her the momentous proposition that she should undertake the lives of the early Spanish kings and ecclesiastics for the *Dictionary of Christian Biography*. And there, in the four volumes of the *Dictionary*, her articles stand to this day, a monument to an early enthusiasm lightly kindled by a word from a

great man, but pursued with all the patience and intensity of the true historian.

In the course of this work on the early Spaniards she developed an extraordinary attachment to the Bodleian, with all the most secret corners of which she soon became familiar, under the benevolent guidance of the Librarian, Mr. Coxe. The charm of the noble building, with its mellow lights and shades, its silences, its deep spaces of book-lined walls, sank into her very soul and gave her that background of the love of books and reading which became perhaps—next to her love of nature—the strongest solace of her after-life. At the age of twenty she wrote a little essay, called "A Morning in the Bodleian,"[1] which reflects all the joy—nay, the pride—of her own long days of work among the calf-bound volumes.

"As you slip into the chair set ready for you," she writes, "a deep repose steals over you—the repose, not of indolence but of possession; the product of time, work and patient thought only. Literature has no guerdon for 'bread-students,' to quote the expressive German phrase; let not the young man reading for his pass, the London copyist or the British Museum illuminator, hope to enter within the enchanted ring of her benignest influences; only to the silent ardour, the thirst, the disinterestedness of the true learner, is she prodigal of all good gifts. To him she beckons, in him she confides, till she has produced in him that wonderful many-sidedness, that universal human sympathy which stamps the true literary man, and which is more religious than any form of creed."

A touch about the German students to be found there has its note of prophecy: "In a small inner room are the Hebrew manuscripts; a German is working there, another in shirt-sleeves is here—strange people of innumerable tentacles, stretching all ways, from Genesis to the latest form of the needle-gun." And in the last page we come upon her most intimate reflections, the thoughts pressed together from her many months of comradeship with those silent tomes, which show, better than any letters, the

[1] Privately printed.

quality of a mind but just emerging—as the years are reckoned—from its teens :—

" Who can pass out of such a building without a feeling of profound melancholy ? The thought is almost too obvious to be dwelt upon ; but it is overpowering and inevitable. These shelves of mighty folios, these cases of laboured manuscripts, these illuminated volumes of which each may represent a life—the first, dominant impression which they make cannot fail to be like that which a burial-ground leaves—a Hamlet-like sense of ' the pity of it.' Which is the sadder image, the dust of Alexander stopping a bung-hole, or the brain and life-blood of a hundred monks cumbering the shelves of the Bodleian ? Not the former, for Alexander's dust matters little where his work is considered, but these monks' work is in their books ; to their books they sacrificed their lives, and gave themselves up as an offering to posterity. And posterity, overburdened by its own concerns, passes them by without a look or a word ! Here and there, of course, is a volume which has made a mark upon the world ; but the mass are silent for ever, and zeal, industry, talent, for once that they have had permanent results, have a thousand times been sealed by failure. And yet men go on writing, writing ; and books are born under the shadow of the great libraries just as children are born within sight of the tombs. It seems as though Nature's law were universal as well as rigid in its sphere—wide wastes of sand shut in the green oasis, many a seed falls among thorns or by the wayside, many a bud must be sacrificed before there comes the perfect flower, many a little life must exhaust itself in a useless book before the great book is made which is to remain a force for ever. And so we might as profitably murmur at the withered buds, at the seed that takes no root, at the stretch of desert, as at the unread folios. They are waste, it is true ; but it is the waste that is thrown off by Humanity in its ceaseless process towards the fulfilment of its law."

No doubt her life was not all books during these four years, though books gave it its tone and background ; she took her part in the gaieties of Oxford, in Eights Week and Commem. and in river parties to the Nuneham woods, and

it is to be feared that her stout resistance to the " seductiveness of Oxford, its moonlight charms and Romeo and Juliet character " was not of long duration. In one select Oxford pastime, the game of croquet, she attained to real pre-eminence, becoming, after her marriage, one of the moving spirits of the Oxford Croquet Club. But her shyness made social events no special joy to her, and she was far happier sitting at the feet of " Mark Pat " or helping " Mrs. Pat " with her etching in the sitting-room upstairs than in making conversation with the youth of Oxford.

One charming glimpse of her, however, at a social function remains to us in the letters of M. Taine. The great Frenchman had come over in the very spring of the *Commune* (1871) to give a course of lectures at Oxford; he met her one evening at the Master of Balliol's, being introduced to her by Jowett himself. " ' A very clever girl,' said Professor Jowett, as he was taking me towards her. She is about twenty, very nice-looking and dressed with taste (rather a rare thing here: I saw one lady imprisoned in a most curious sort of pink silk sheath). Miss Arnold was born out in Australia, where she was brought up till the age of five. She knows French, German and Italian, and during this last year has been studying old Spanish of the time of the Cid; also Latin, in order to be able to understand the mediæval chronicles. All her mornings she spends at the Bodleian Library—a most intellectual lady, but yet a simple, charming girl. By exercise of great tact, I finally led her on to telling me of an article—her first—that she was writing for *Macmillan's Magazine* upon the oldest romances. In extenuation of it she said, ' Everybody writes or lectures here, and one must follow the fashion. Besides, it passes the time, and the library is so fine and so convenient.' Not in the least pedantic! " [1]

Mary's efforts at writing fiction, which had been many from her school-days onwards, were far less successful at this stage than her more serious essays; but she persisted in the attempt, for the pressure on the family budget was always so great that she longed to make herself independent of it by earning something with her pen. She sent one story, at the age of eighteen, to Messrs. Smith & Elder,

[1] *Life and Letters of H. Taine.* Trans. by E. Sparrel-Bayly, Vol. III, p. 58.

her future publishers, but when it was politely declined by them she showed her philosophy in the following note—

LALEHAM, OXFORD.
October 1, 1869.

DEAR SIRS,—

I beg to thank you for your courteous letter. "Ailie" is a juvenile production and I am not sorry you decline to publish it. Had it appeared in print I should probably have been ashamed of it by and by.

I remain,
Yours obediently,
MARY ARNOLD.

But at length no less a veteran than Miss Charlotte Yonge, who was then editing a blameless magazine named the *Churchman's Companion*, accepted a tale from her called "A Westmorland Story," and Mary's joy and pride were unbounded. But the tale shows no glimpse, I think, of her future power, and is as far removed from "A Morning in the Bodleian" as water is from wine.

Sometimes the Forsters would invite her to stay with them in London, and so it occurred that at the age of eighteen she was actually there, in the Ladies' Gallery of the House of Commons, when her uncle brought in his famous Education Bill. In after life she was always glad to recall that day, and when in the fullness of time her own path led her among the stunted lives of London's children she liked to think that she was in a sense continuing her uncle's work.

In the winter of 1870–71 she first met Mr. T. Humphry Ward, Fellow and Tutor of Brasenose College, between whom and herself an instant attraction became manifest. Mr. Ward was the son of the Rev. Henry Ward, Vicar of St. Barnabas, King Square, E.C., while his mother was Jane Sandwith, sister of the well-known Army surgeon at the siege of Kars, Humphry Sandwith, and herself a woman of remarkable charm and beauty of character. By an odd chance, J. R. Green, the historian, had been curate to Mr. Henry Ward in London for two years, had made himself the devoted friend of all his numerous children and has left in his published Letters a striking tribute to the great

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qualities of Mrs. Ward.[1] But she died at the age of forty-two, and Mary Arnold never knew her. The course of true love ran smoothly through the spring of 1871, and on June 16, five days after Mary's twentieth birthday, they became engaged. Never was happiness more golden, and when the pair of lovers went to stay at Fox How and the young man was introduced to all the well-beloved places—Sweden Bridge and Loughrigg, Rydal Water and the stepping-stones—she was quite puzzled, as she wrote to him afterwards, by the change that had come over the mountains, by the "new relations between Westmorland and me!" It was simply, as she said, that the mountains had become the frame, instead of being, as hitherto, the picture.

They were engaged for ten months, and then, on April 6, 1872, Dean Stanley married them and they settled, a little later, in a house in Bradmore Road (then No. 5, now 17), where they lived and worked for the next nine years.

Strenuous and delightful years! In looking back over them her old friends recall with amazement her intense vitality and energy, in spite of many lapses of health; how she was always at work, writing articles or reviewing books to eke out the family income, and how she seemed besides to bear on her shoulders the cares of two families, her own and her husband's. She was the eldest and he the third of a long string of brothers and sisters, the younger of whom were still quite children and much in need of shepherding. The house in Bradmore Road was always a second home to them. Her own parents lived close by and she was much in and out of their house, sharing in their anxieties and struggles and helping whenever it was possible to help. For she was linked to her father by a deep and instinctive devotion, much strengthened by these years of companionship at Oxford, and to her mother by a more aching sense of pity and longing. Tom Arnold was growing restless again in the mid-'seventies, and when he went with his younger children to church at St. Philip's they would nudge each other to hear him muttering under his breath the Latin

[1] He called her "the greatest and best person I have ever met, or shall ever meet, in this world."—*Letters of J. R. Green.* Ed. Leslie Stephen, p. 284.

prayers of long ago—little thinking, poor babes, how their very bread and butter might hang upon these mutterings! But in 1876 there came a day when his election to the Professorship of Early English was almost a foregone conclusion; as the author of the standard edition of Wycliffe's English Works he was by far the strongest candidate in the field, and Julia looked forward eagerly to a time of deliverance from their perpetual money troubles. For some months, however, he had secretly made up his mind that he must re-enter the Roman fold, and now that once more his worldly promotion depended on his remaining outside it he decided that this was the moment to make his re-conversion public. He announced it on the very eve of the election, with the result that the majority of the electors decided against him. Poor Mary heard the news early next morning and ran round in great distress to her true friends, the T. H. Greens, pouring it out to them with uncontrollable tears. And, indeed, it was the death-knell of the Arnolds' prosperity at Oxford. Pupils came no longer to be taught by a professing Catholic, and Julia was reduced to taking "boarders" in a smaller house in Church Walk, while Tom earned what he could by incessant writing and eventually took work again at the Catholic University in Dublin. And then a still more terrible blow fell upon Julia; she was discovered to have cancer, and an operation in the autumn of 1877 left her a maimed and suffering invalid. All this could not fail to leave a profound mark on the anxious and tender heart of her daughter, in whom the capacity for human affection seemed to grow and treble with the years; it made a dark background to her Oxford life, otherwise so full to overflowing with the happiness of friends and home.

In her *Recollections* she has given us once and for all a picture of the Oxford of her day which in its brilliance and charm is not to be matched by any later comer. All that can be attempted here is to fill in to some extent the only gap that she has left in it—the portrait of herself. How did she move among that small but gifted community, where Walter Pater revolutionized the taste of Oxford with his Morris papers and blue china, shocked the Oxford world with his paganizing tendencies and would, besides, keep his sisters laughing the whole evening, when they were

quite alone, with his spontaneous fun; where Mandell Creighton was leading and stimulating the teaching of history, with J. R. Green to help him as Examiner in the Modern History Schools; where T. H. Green was inspiring the younger generation with his own robust idealism and the doctrine of the "duty of work," and the more venerable figures of Jowett and Mark Pattison, Ruskin and Matthew Arnold, Stubbs and Freeman dominated the intellectual scene? The impression that she made upon this circle of friends seems first of all to have been one of extraordinary energy and power of work, of great personal charm veiled by a crust of shyness, of intellectual powers for which they had the respect of equals and co-workers, and of a warm and generous sympathy which was yet free from "gush." One of her closest friends in these early years, Mrs. Arthur Johnson, has allowed me to use certain extracts from her journal, in which the figure of "Mary Ward" stands out with the clearness of absolute simplicity. Mrs. Johnson, besides having the public spirit which has since made her the President of the Oxford Home Students' Society, was also a charming artist, and in 1876 painted Mary's portrait in water-colour, using the opportunities which the sittings gave her to explore her friend's mind to the uttermost:

"July 22. Began her portrait. I was so excited that my head ached all day afterwards. She talked of deep, most interesting subjects, and attention to the arguments and drawing too was too much for one's head! I was surprised at the full extent of her vague religion. Jowett is her great admiration and Matt Arnold her guide for some things. She is great on the rising Dutch and French and German school of religious thought, very free criticism of the Bible, entire denial of miracle, our Lord only a great teacher. I felt as if I had been beaten about, as I always do after the excitement of such talks. And yet it is all a striving after righteousness, sincerity, truth." Or, again: "Mary W. came to tea. My visitor was charmed with her and truly she is a sweet, charming person, full of gentleness and sympathy, with all her talent and intelligence too. She had dined at the Pattisons' last night and had felt appalled at the learning of Mrs. P. and Miss ——, 'more in their little fingers than I in my whole body!' But I felt that no one would wish to change her for either of them."

Her music was a constant joy to her friends, and Mrs. Johnson makes frequent mention of her playing of Bach and of her wonderful reading. It was a possession that remained with her, to a certain extent, all her life, in spite of writer's cramp and of a total inability to find time to "keep it up." But even twenty and thirty years later than this date, her playing of Beethoven or Brahms—on the rare occasions when she would allow herself such indulgence—would astonish the few friends who heard it.

Meanwhile the portrait prospered, and was at length presented to its subject when she lay recovering from the birth of her second babe—a boy whom they named Arnold—in November, 1876. "Humphry and I are full of delight over the picture," writes Mary to Mrs. Johnson, "and of wonder at the amount of true and delicate work you have put into it. It will be a possession not only for us but for our children—see how easily the new style comes!" These were prophetic words, for it is indeed the portrait of her that still gives most pleasure to the beholder, though in later years she was painted or drawn by many skilful hands.

Her two babies, Dorothy and Arnold, naturally absorbed a great deal of her time and thoughts in these years, although it was possible in those spacious days to live comfortably and to keep as many little nursery-maids as one required on £800 or £900 a year, which was about the income that husband and wife jointly earned. Her natural talent for "doctoring" showed itself very early in the skill with which she fed her babies or cured them of their ills when they were sick. Nor was she content with her domestic success, but in days before "Infant Welfare" had ever been thought of she wrote a leaflet entitled "Plain Facts on Infant Feeding" and circulated it in the slums of Oxford. We will not, however, rescue it from oblivion, lest it should be found to contain heretical matter! But there was still time for other pursuits, and since both she and her husband did their writing mainly at night, from nine to twelve, Mary began to show her practical powers in other directions, and to take a leading part in the movement for the higher education of women which was then absorbing some of the best minds of Oxford. As early as the winter of 1873–4 a committee was formed among this group of friends, with Mrs. Ward and Mrs. Creighton (followed, on the latter's departure, by

Mrs. T. H. Green) as joint secretaries, for organizing regular "Lectures for Women"—not in any connection with the University, for this was as yet impossible, but in order to satisfy the growing demand among the women residents of Oxford for more serious instruction in history, or modern languages, or Latin. The first series of lectures was held in the early spring of 1874, in the Clarendon Buildings, with Mr. A. H. Johnson as lecturer; it was an immediate success, and the large sum of 5s. which each member of the Committee had put down as a guarantee could be triumphantly refunded. Further courses were arranged in each succeeding winter, till in 1877 the same committee expanded into an "Association for the Education of Women" (again with Mrs. Ward as secretary [1]), which undertook still more important work. The idea of the founding of Women's Colleges was already in the air, for Girton and Newnham had led the way at Cambridge, and all through 1878 plans were being discussed to this end. In the next year a special committee was formed for the raising of funds towards the foundation of a "Hall of Residence"; Mrs. Ward and Mrs. Augustus Vernon Harcourt were joint secretaries, but since the latter soon fell ill the whole burden of correspondence fell upon Mary's shoulders. "There seems no end to the things I have to do just now," she writes to her father in June, 1879. "All the secretary's work for Somerville Hall falls on me now as my colleague, Mrs. Harcourt, is laid up, and yesterday and the day before I have had the house full of girls being examined for scholarship at the Hall, and have had to copy out examination papers and look after them generally. Our Lady Principal, Miss Shaw-Lefevre, is here and she came to dinner to-night to talk business about furnishing, etc. I think we are getting on. Did you see in *The Times* that the Clothworkers' Company have given us 100 guineas?"

And thus the work went on, week after week, all through the year 1879. I have before me a common-looking engagement-diary in which it is all recorded, from the month of March to late in the month of October: all the committee-meetings, all the letters written to newspapers, to prospective students or to possible heads;

[1] After the foundation of Somerville Hall Mrs. Ward was succeeded in the Secretaryship by Mrs. T. H. Green and Mr. Henry Butcher.

the decision to purchase the lease of "Walton House," "to be assigned to the President (Dr. Percival) on August 1"; the builder's estimate for alterations ("£540 for raising the roof and making twelve bedrooms"), the letters about drainage, or cretonne, or armchairs and fenders, no less than the resolution passed at Balliol on October 24 to "form a Company for the management of the Hall under the Limited Liability Act of 1862, with a nominal capital of £25,000." But by that time the Hall was already opened and the long labour crowned; and a fortnight afterwards, on November 6, her youngest child was born. It may be hoped that after this Mrs. Ward took a brief holiday from the cares of Somerville.

Mrs. Ward remained a member of the original Council of Somerville Hall long after her departure from Oxford, and during her last two years there continued to be largely responsible, as one of the most active members of the Association for the Education of Women, for the organization of the teaching. All the lectures were arranged by the Association—in consultation, of course, with the Principal—for it was not until 1884 that women students were admitted to the smallest of the University examinations, or to lectures at a few of the Colleges.

Thus had Mrs. Ward learnt her first lesson and won her first laurels in the carrying out of a big piece of public work. It was an experience that was to stand her in good stead in after years. But at this time her ambitions were still largely historical, weaving themselves in dreams and plans for the writing of that big book on the origins of modern Spain of which she afterwards sketched the counterpart in Elsmere's projected book on the origins of modern France. Very likely she would have settled down to write it before the opening of Somerville, but as early as October, 1877, she had received a very flattering offer from Dean Wace, the general editor of the *Dictionary of Christian Biography*, to take a large share in writing the lives of the early Spanish ecclesiastics for that monumental work. It was an offer that she could not refuse, and she always spoke with gratitude of the years of hard and exacting work that followed, although once or twice she almost broke down under the strain of it. "Sheer, hard, brain-stretching work," she calls it in her *Recollections*, and if anyone will

look up her articles on Joannes Biclarensis, or Idatius, or the Histories of Isidore of Seville, they will see how triply justified she was in using the term. "You have gone over the ground so thoroughly that there is no gleaning left," wrote Mr. C. W. Boase, in those days one of the best-known of Oxford history tutors, while Dean Wace himself, in the many letters he wrote to her, showed by his kindness and consideration how much he valued her contributions. Oxford began to think that she was definitely committed to an historical career, when to its astonishment she came out as the author of a children's story. "Milly and Olly" was the record of her own "Holiday among the Mountains" with her children in the summer of 1879, but the very simplicity of the tale has endeared it to many generations of children and child-lovers, while the stories it contains of Beowulf and the Spanish Queen give it a note of romance that differentiates it from other nursery tales. She wrote it almost as a relaxation in the summer of 1880; in the midst of her historical work it showed that the story-telling instinct was already stirring within her.

And indeed the Oxford historical school was to be disappointed in her after all, for her labours on the early Spaniards were in reality to lead her into far other fields. Her interest in the problems of Christianity had only gathered strength with the years, and were now greatly stimulated by these researches into the early history of the Spanish Church. She began to feel the enormous importance to the believer of the *historical testimony* on which the whole fabric rested, while her keen historical imagination enabled her to grasp the mentality of those distant ages which produced for us the literature of the New Testament. A feeling of revolt against the arrogance of the orthodox party, as it was represented in Oxford by Christchurch and Dr. Pusey, grew and increased in her mind, while at the same time she became more and more attracted by the romance and mystery of Christianity when stripped of the coating of legend which pious hands had given it. As early as 1871 she had written to Mr. Ward (à propos of a somewhat fatuous sermon to which she had been listening): "How will you make Christianity into a *motive*?—that is the puzzle. Traditional and conventional Christianity is worked out—certainly as far as the great artisan and intelligent working-

class in England is concerned, and all those who are young and touched, ever so vaguely and uncertainly, with the thought-atmosphere, thought-currents of the day. Is there a substitute which shall still be Christianity? Yes surely, but it is not to be arrived at by mere arbitrary remoulding and petulant upsetting as Mr. Voysey seems to think." And two years later she writes to her father: "Just now it seems to me that one cannot make one's belief too simple or hold what one does believe too strongly. Of dogmatic Christianity I can make nothing. Nothing is clear except the personal character of Christ and that view of Him as the founder and lawgiver of a new society which struck me years ago in *Ecce Homo*. And the more I read and think over the New Testament the more impossible it seems to me to accept what is ordinarily called the scheme of Christianity."

But these reflections need never have led her in the direction of writing *Robert Elsmere* if it had not been for a personal incident. On Sunday, March 6, 1881, she attended the first Bampton Lecture of the Rev. John Wordsworth, afterwards Bishop of Salisbury. It was on "the present unsettlement in religion," and the speaker castigated the holders of unorthodox views as being very definitely guilty of sin. Something in the tone of the sermon set Mary's heart on fire within her. She walked home in a tumult of feeling. That this man with his confident phrases should dare thus to arraign the leaders of the Liberal host—men of such noble lives as T. H. Green, thinkers like Jowett and Matt Arnold! She sat down and wrote, within a very few days, a reply to Dr. Wordsworth entitled "Unbelief and Sin: a Protest addressed to those who attended the Bampton Lecture of Sunday, March 6." A little pamphlet cast in the form of a dialogue between two Oxford men, it was put up for sale in Slatter & Rose's window and attracted considerable attention. But before it had been selling for many hours a certain ecclesiastic took the bookseller aside and pointed out that the pamphlet bore no printer's name, which made the sale illegal. He politely threatened proceedings, and the bookseller in alarm withdrew it from circulation and sent the unsold copies up to Bradmore Road with an apology, but a firm intimation that no further copies could be sold. Mary laughed and submitted, and sent her anonymous offspring round to various friends,

among them the redoubtable Rector of Lincoln. He replied to her as follows :—

"No, I did not guess your secret. It was whispered to me in the street, and I fancy was no secret within the first week of publication.

"I admire your courage in attacking one of their strong places. The doctrine of disbelief in Church principles being due to a propensity to secret sins is one of the oldest tenets of the Anglican party. It is also a fundamental principle of popular Catholicism. I have heard it from the catholic pulpit so often that it must have among them the character of a commonplace.

"There is, as you admit, a certain basis of fact for it—just as 'Patriotism' is often enough the trade of the egoist. 'Licence they mean when they cry liberty.'

"More interesting even than your argument against the psychological dogma, was your constructive hint as to the 'Church of the future.' I wish I could follow you there! But that is an 'argumentum non unius horæ.'

"Believe me, dear Mrs. Ward, to be

"Yr. attached friend,

"MARK PATTISON."

It was indeed an argument, not of a single hour, but of many long years. But the spark had been set to a complex train of thought which was now to work itself out through toil and stress towards its appointed end.

CHAPTER III

EARLY YEARS IN LONDON—THE WRITING OF *ROBERT ELSMERE*

1881–1888

IT was in the early summer of 1880 that Mr. Ward was first approached by Mr. Chenery, the editor, with a suggestion that he should join the staff of *The Times*. The proposal was in many ways an attractive one, in spite of the love of both husband and wife for Oxford, for Mr. Ward was becoming known to a wider world than that of Oxford by his *English Poets*, which had appeared in this year, nor was he a novice in journalism. His wife, too, had many links with London through her visits to the Forsters and her journalistic work. The experiment began in a tentative way in the winter of 1880–81, she remaining in Oxford with the children, and he being "tried" for leader-writing while staying in Bloomsbury lodgings. Within a very few months it proved itself a success, and, after some pleasant interviews with Mr. John Walter, he was retained on the permanent staff of the paper. They began seriously to plan their removal and to look for a house, and found one at length in that comfortable Bloomsbury region, which was then innocent of big hotels and offices, and where the houses in Russell Square had not yet suffered embellishment in the form of pink terra-cotta facings to their windows. They found that the oldest house in the Square, No. 61, was to let, and in spite of the dirt of years with which it was encrusted, perceived its possibilities at once, and came to an agreement with its owner. A charming old house, built in 1745, its prettiest feature was a small square entrance-hall, with eighteenth-century stucco-work on the walls, from which a wide staircase ascended to the drawing-room, giving an impression of space

rare in a *bourgeois* London house. At the back was a good-sized strip of garden shaded by tall old plane-trees and running down to meet the gardens of Queen Square, for No. 61 stood on the east side of the square and adjoined the first house of Southampton Row. Little powder-closets jutted out at the back, one of which Mrs. Ward used as her writing-room, and upstairs the bedroom floors seemed to expand as you ascended, reaching only to a third story, but giving us rooms enough even so for ourselves, our maids, and a German governess, besides the various relations who were constantly coming to stay. Wholly pleasant are the memories connected with that benign old house, to us children as well as to our elders, save only that to the youngest of us there were always two lurking horrors, one on the second floor landing, where a dark alcove gave harbourage to a little old man in Scotch kilts, who might, if your legs were not swift enough, come after you as you toiled up the last flight, and one—still more disquieting—on the top landing itself, where the taps dripped in a dreadful little boxroom, and if the taps dripped you knew that the water-bogy, *who lives in taps*, might at any moment escape and overwhelm you. Since no self-respecting child ever imparts its terrors to its elders, these nightmares went unknown until one night, when all the maids were downstairs at supper, the child in question could not make up its mind to cross the landing, past the dark mouth of that box-room, from the room where it undressed to the room where it slept, and was found an hour later, fast asleep in a chair, with towels pinned over every inch of its small body lest the bogy should come out and catch hold. After this crisis I think the terrors declined, and now, alas! taps and box-room and dark alcove have all disappeared together, with the pleasant rooms downstairs and the gravelled garden where one made so many persevering expeditions with the salt-cellar, after the tails of London's sparrows—all swept away and vanished, and the air that they enclosed parcelled out once more into the rectangles of the Imperial Hotel! Peace be to the ghost of that poor house, for it gave happiness in its latter days for nine long years to the human folk who inhabited it, and it watched the unfolding of a human heart and mind which were to have no mean influence upon the generation that encompassed them.

The house at Oxford was disposed of to the Henry Nettleships, at Michaelmas, 1881, and in the following November the family moved in to Russell Square. It was not without searchings of heart, I think, that Mr. and Mrs. Ward embarked upon the larger venture, where all depended on their retaining health and strength for their work; but they fondly hoped that with the larger regular income from *The Times* the burden on both pairs of shoulders would be lessened.

> "All will be well with us yet," wrote Mrs. Ward to her husband three months before their move, "and if God is good to us there are coming years of work indeed, but of less burden and strain. All depends on you and me, and though I know the very thought depresses us sometimes, it ought not to, for we have many good gifts within and without, and a fair field, if not the fairest possible field to use them in. It seems to me that all I want to be happy is to keep my own heart and conscience clear, and to feel my way open into the presence of God and the unseen. And surely to seek is to find."

Years of less burden and strain! She had, indeed, forgotten the spirit within, which was to drive her on to ever new and greater efforts in the more stimulating atmosphere of London. Though her work for the *Dictionary of Christian Biography* was almost over, she had by this time made the acquaintance of Mr. Morley, then editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, and was doing much reviewing of French and Spanish books for him, while she continued to write weekly articles for the Church *Guardian* and the *Oxford Chronicle*. Nor were the authorities of *The Times* long in finding out that she too could write, and by the autumn of 1882 many foreign books reached her for review from Printing House Square. She complains in her letters that she cannot get through them quickly enough. "Three or four volumes of these books a week is about all I can do, and that seems to go no way." The inevitable expenses of London life did in fact weigh upon her heavily within a year of their migration, and the sense of "burden and strain" was never long absent. But she could not have lived otherwise. It was her fundamental instinct to work herself to the bone and then to share her good times with others less fortunate, and since this process made away with her earnings she would work herself

to the bone again. In this atmosphere of unremitting toil interruptions were of course discouraged, but when they occurred in spite of all defences she never showed the irritation which so frequently accompanies overwork. And in the many interruptions caused by the childish illnesses of her small family her tenderness and devotion were beyond all words. How she dosed us with aconite and belladonna, watching over us and compelling us to throw off our fevers and colds! Nor was anything allowed to interfere with the befriending of all members of the family who wished to come to Russell Square. Her brother Willie, who had by this time been appointed to the staff of the *Manchester Guardian*, was a frequent visitor, renewing with each appearance his literary *camaraderie* with her and delighting in the friends whom she would ask to meet him. Matthew Arnold, too, was sometimes to be caught for an evening—great occasions, those, for Mrs. Ward's relations with him were already of the most affectionate. He influenced her profoundly in literary and critical matters, for she imbibed from him both her respect for German thoroughness and her passion for French perfection. These, indeed, were the years when she saw most of "Uncle Matt," for Pains' Hill Cottage, at Cobham, was not too far away for a Sunday visit, so that she and Mr. Ward would sometimes fly down there for an afternoon of talk. Usually, however, she would return full of blasphemies about his precious dogs, who had diverted their master's attention all through the walk and prevented the flow of his wit and wisdom. Therefore she preferred to get him safely to herself at Russell Square!

Her two younger sisters, Julia and Ethel, were constantly in the house, the elder of whom married in 1885 Mr. Leonard Huxley, and so brought about a happy connection with the Professor and his wife, which gave Mrs. Ward much joy for many years. Nor were her neighbours neglected. When Christmas came round there was always a wonderful *Weihnachtsbaum*, dressed with loving care by the good German governess, and by any uncles and aunts who were within reach, and attended not only by all possible relations and friends (including especially and always Mr. and Mrs. J. R. Thursfield and their children), but also by the choir-boys of St. John's Church and by many of *their* relations too. But behind all this eager hospitality lay a far deeper

longing. Her mother had, early in 1881, undergone a second operation for cancer, and though this gave her a year's immunity from pain the malady returned. In March, 1882, she wrote to her daughter with stoical courage that she foresaw what was in store for her—"a hard ending to a hard life." Though she was devotedly nursed by her youngest daughter, Ethel, her suffering overshadowed the next six years of Mary's life like a cloud, but it became also Mrs. Ward's keenest joy to be able to help her and to ease her path. Once when she herself had been ill and suffering, she wrote her a few lines which reveal her own inmost thoughts on the relation between pain and faith :

> "I am *so* sorry, dearest, for your own suffering. This is a weary world,—but there is good behind it, 'a holy will,' as Amiel says, 'at the root of nature and destiny,' and submission brings peace because in submission the heart finds God and in God its rest. There is no truth I believe in more profoundly."

Yet in spite of the unceasing round of work, what compensations there were in the London life ! The making of new friends can never fail to be a delightful process, and it very soon became apparent that Mrs. Ward was to be adopted to the heart of that London world which thought about books and politics and which incidentally was making history. London was smaller then than now, and if a newcomer had brains and modesty, and above all a gift of sympathy that won all hearts, there were few doors that did not open to her or him in time. Her connection with the Forsters and with "Uncle Matt" brought her many friends to start with, while Mr. Ward's work on *The Times* took them naturally both into the world of painters (for after 1884 he joined art criticism to his political and other writing) and into the world of affairs. A letter written to Mrs. A. H. Johnson in May, 1885, gives a typical picture of the social side of her life three years after the move to London. The occasion is the marriage of Alfred Lyttelton and Laura Tennant :

> "The wedding function yesterday was very interesting. I am glad not to have missed Gladstone's speech at the breakfast. What a wondrous man it is ! The intensity, the feeling of the speech were extraordinary. . . . Life has been rather exciting lately in the way of new friends,

the latest acquisition being Mr. Goschen, to whom I have quite lost my heart! There is a pliancy and a brilliancy about him which make him one of the most delightful companions. We dined there last Saturday and I have seldom had so much interesting talk. Lord Arthur Russell, who sat next me, told me stories of how, as a child at Geneva, he had met folk who in their youth had seen Rousseau and known Voltaire, and had been intimate friends of Mme. de Stael in middle life. And then, coming a little further down the stream of time, he could describe to me having stayed at Lamartine's château in the poet's old age, and so on. Mr. Goschen is busy on a life of his grandfather, who was the publisher of Goethe, Schiller and Wieland, and whose correspondence, which he is now going through, covers the whole almost of the German literary period,—so that after dinner the scene shifted to Germany, and we talked away with an occasional raid into politics, till, to my great regret, the evening was over."

Her own little dinner-parties very soon began to make their mark, while not long after their establishment in London, she began the practice of being at home on Thursday afternoons, and though at first her natural shyness and lack of small talk made her openings somewhat formidable, she soon warmed to the task, till within a very few months her Thursdays became a much-appreciated institution. Men, as well as women, came to them, for they always liked to make her talk and to hear her eager views on all the topics of the day, from Irish coercion to the literary personalities of France, or the need for prodding the Universities to open their examinations to women. She still called herself a good Radical in these days, but her devotion to Mr. Forster —whom she had visited in Dublin during his Chief Secretaryship—gave the first reservations to her Liberal faith, for she took his part in the matter of his resignation, and felt that he had not been sufficiently supported by the Cabinet. It was a great grief to her that Mr. Morley, in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, found it necessary to attack Mr. Forster's Irish administration with such persistent energy, and once, towards the end of 1882, she summoned up the courage to write him a remonstrance in good set terms. Mr. Morley's reply is characteristic :

Dec. 13, 82.

DEAR MRS. WARD,—

I have got your letter at last, and carefully read and digested it. Need I say that its frank and direct vigour only increases my respect for the writer? To answer it, as it deserves, is hardly possible for me. It would take a day for me to set forth, with proper reference to chapter and verse, all the reasons why I could not follow Mr. Forster in his Irish administration. They were set forth from time to time with almost tiresome iteration as events moved forward.

In all that you say about Mr. Forster's unselfishness, his industry, his strenuous desire to do what was right and best, nobody agrees more cordially than I do. Personally I have always had—if it is not impertinent in me to say so—a great liking for him. He was always very kind and obliging to me, and nothing has been more painful to me than to know that I was writing what would wound a family for whom I have such sincere respect as I have for his. But the occasion was grave. I have been thinking about Ireland all my life, and that fashion of governing it is odious and intolerable. If Sir Charles Dilke or Mr. Chamberlain had been Chief Secretary, and carried out the Coercion Act as Mr. Forster carried it out, I could not have attacked either of them, but I should have resigned my editorship rather than have connived by silence or otherwise at such mischief.

I may at times have seemed bitter and personal in my language about Mr. Forster. One falls into this tone too readily, when fighting a battle day after day, and writing without time for calm revision. For that I am sorry, if it has been so, or seemed so. Mr. Forster's friends—some of them—have been extremely unscrupulous in their personalities against me, their charges of intrigue, conspiracy. All that I do not care for one jot; my real regret, and it is a very sincere one, is that I should seem unjust or vindictive to people like you, who think honestly and calmly about politics, and other things.

I hope that it is over, and that I shall never have to say a word about Mr. Forster's Irish policy again.

Yours very sincerely,

JOHN MORLEY.

Such a letter only served to strengthen friendship. Mrs. Ward's literary comradeship with Mr. Morley remained unbroken in spite of widening differences in politics, and when, a few months later, he assumed the editorship of *Macmillan's Magazine* he proposed to her that she should virtually take over its literary criticism :—

March 22, 83.

DEAR MRS. WARD,—

My reign over " Macmillan " will begin in May. I want to know whether you can help me to a literary article once a month—in the shape of a *compte rendu* of some new books, English or French. It is highly desirable that the subject should be as lively and readable as possible—not erudite and academic, but literary, or socio-literary, as Ste Beuve was.

I don't see why a " causerie " from you once a month should not become as marked a feature in our world, as Ste Beuve was to France. In time, the articles would make matter for a volume, and so you would strike the stars with your sublime head.

I hope my suggestion will commend itself to you. I have been counting upon you, and shall be horribly discouraged if you say No.

Yours sincerely,
JOHN MORLEY.

Flattered as she was by the suggestion, she was never able to carry out his whole behest, yet between February, 1883, and June, 1885, she wrote no less than twelve articles for *Macmillan's*, on subjects ranging from the young Spanish Romanticist, Gustavo Becquer, to Keats, Jane Austen, Renan and the " Literature of Introspection " (à propos of Amiel's *Journal Intime*), while the series was ended by a full-dress review of Pater's *Marius the Epicurean*. These articles did much to assure her position in the world of pure literature, as her Dictionary articles had assured it in the world of scholarship, and she never ceased to be grateful to Mr. Morley for the opportunities he had given her in inviting them, for the encouragement of his praise and the bracing of his occasional criticism.

But these articles were all written under the heaviest

physical disabilities. Early in 1883 she began to suffer from a violent form of writer's cramp, which made her right hand almost useless at times, and recurred at intervals all through her life, so that writing was usually a far more arduous and painful process to her than it is to most of us. Through the years 1883 and 1884 she was frequently reduced to writing with her left hand, but she also dictated much to her young sister-in-law, Gertrude Ward, who came to live with us at this time, and became for the next eight years the prop and support of our household. Many remedies were tried for the ailment, but nothing was really effective until after two years a German "writing-master" came on the scene, one Dr. Julius Wolff, who completely transformed her method of writing by making her sit much higher than before, rest the whole fore-arm on the table, and use an altogether different set of muscles. Many curious exercises he gave her also, which she practised at intervals for years afterwards, and by these means he succeeded in giving her comparative immunity, though whenever she was specially pressed with work the pain and weakness would recur. During the year 1884, however, before Dr. Wolff had appeared, her arm was practically disabled, and she wore it much in a sling.

Yet it was during this year that she began her translation of Amiel's *Journal* and wrote her first novel, *Miss Bretherton*. The idea of it was suggested by her first sight of the beautiful actress, Mary Anderson, though she always maintained that, once created, Isabel Bretherton became to her an absolutely distinct personality. The manner of its writing is told in a fragment of Miss Gertrude Ward's journal:

"The book was written in about six weeks. She used to lie or sit out of doors at Borough Farm, with a notebook and pencil, and scrawl down what she could with her left hand; then she would come in about twelve and dictate to me at a great rate for an hour or more. In the afternoon and evening she would look over and correct what was done, and I copied out the whole. The scene of Marie and Kendal in his rooms was dictated in her bedroom; she lay on her bed, and I sat by the window behind a screen."

The book was published by Messrs. Macmillan and

appeared in December, 1884. It attracted a good deal of attention. The general verdict was that it was a fine and delicate piece of work, but on too limited, too intellectual a scale. This view was admirably put by her old friend, Mr. Creighton (then Emmanuel Professor at Cambridge):

MY DEAR MRS. WARD,—

I have read *Miss Bretherton* with much interest. It was hardly fair on the book to know the plot beforehand, but I found myself carried away by the delicate feeling with which the development of character was traced. The Nuneham scene, the death-bed and the final reconciliation were really touching and powerfully worked out.

At the same time it is not a novel of my sort. I demand that I should have given me an entire slice of life, and that I should see the mutual interaction of a number of characters. Your interest centres entirely on one character: your characters all move in the same region of ideas, and that a narrow one. Your book is dainty, but it does not touch the great springs of life. Of course you didn't mean it to do so: but I am putting before you what I conceive to be the novelist's ideal. It seems to me that a novelist must have seen much, must lay himself out to be conversant with many sides of life, must have no line of his own, but must lend himself to the life of those around him. This is the direct opposite of the critic. I wonder if the two trades can be combined. Have you ever read Sainte Beuve's solitary novel, *Volupté*? It is instructive reading. You are a critic in your novel. Your object is really to show how criticism can affect a nature capable of receiving it. Now is this properly a subject of art? Is it not too didactic? It is not so for me, for I am an old-fashioned moralist: but the mass of people do not care for intellectual teaching in novels. They want an emotional thrill. Remember that you have deliberately put this aside. Kendal's love is not made to affect his life, his character, his work. Miss Bretherton only feels so far attracted to him as to listen to what he says. . . . I only say this to show you what the book made me think, that you wrote as a critic not as a creator. You threw into the form of a story many critical judgments, and gave an excellent sketch of the



BOROUGH FARM

FROM A WATER-COLOUR SKETCH BY MRS. HUMPHRY WARD

possible worth of criticism in an unregenerate world. This was worth doing once : but if you are going on with novels you must throw criticism to the winds and let yourself go as a partner of common joys, common sorrows and common perplexities. There, I have told you what I think just as I think it. I would not have done so to anyone else save you, to whom I am always,

Your most affectionate,

M. CREIGHTON.

No doubt Mrs. Ward stored up this criticism for future use, for when she next embarked upon a novel the canvas was indeed broad enough.

They had not been settled in London for much more than a year before Mrs. Ward began to feel the need for some quiet and remote country place to which she might fly for peace and work when the strain of London became too great. Fortune favoured the quest, for in the summer of 1882 they took the rectory at Peper Harow, near Godalming (the "Murewell Rectory" of *Robert Elsmere*), for a few weeks, and during that time were taken by Lord Midleton, the owner of Peper Harow, to see a delightful old farm in the heart of the lonely stretch of country that lies between the Portsmouth Road and Elstead. They fell in love with it at once, and during the following winter made an arrangement to take its six or seven front rooms by the year. So from the summer of 1883 onwards they possessed Borough Farm as a refuge and solace in the wilds, a paradise for elders and children alike, where London and its turmoil could be cast off and forgotten. It lay in a country of heather commons, woods, rough meadows, streams and lakes—those "Hammer Ponds" which remain as a relic of the iron-smelting days of Surrey, and in which we children amused ourselves by the hour in fishing for perch with a bent pin and a worm. Here Mrs. Ward would lie out whenever the sun shone in the old sand-pit up the lane, where we had constructed a sort of terrace for her long chair, or else under the ash-tree on the little hill, writing or reading, while no sound came save the murmur of wind in the gorse, or in the dry bells of the heather. If her physique had been stronger she would, perhaps, have been too much tempted by the beauty of the country ever to have

lain still and worked for so many hours as she did in that long chair; but she was never robust, she was extremely susceptible to bad weather, cold winds and every form of chill, and her longest expeditions were those which she took in a little pony-carriage over Ryal or Bagmoor Commons to Peper Harow, or up the Portsmouth Road to Thursley and Hindhead.

Here a few friends came at intervals to share the solitude with us: Laura Tennant, on a wonderful day in May, 1884, when she seemed to her dazzled hostess the very incarnation of the spring; M. Edmond Scherer, her earliest French friend, who, in 1884, was helping her with her translation of Amiel's *Journal;* Henry James, whose visit laid the foundation of a friendship that was to ripen into one of the most precious of all Mrs. Ward's possessions; Mlle. Souvestre, foundress of the well-known girls' school at Wimbledon, and one of the keenest intellects of her time; and once, for a whole fortnight, Miss Eugénie Sellers,[1] who had for many months been teaching the family their classics, and who now came down to superintend their Greek a little and to roam the commons with them much. It was in 1886, just before this visit, that Mrs. Ward began seriously to read Greek, usually with her ten-year-old son; she bought a Thucydides in Godalming one day and was delighted to find it easier than she expected. It was a passion that grew upon her with the years, as any reader of her later books will clearly perceive.

Then, though the solitude of the farm itself was profound, there were a few, a very few, neighbours in the more eligible districts round about who made it their pleasure sometimes to call upon us; there were the Frederic Harrisons at Elstead, whose four boys dared us children to horrid feats of jumping and climbing in the sand-pit, while our elders were safely engaged elsewhere; John Morley also, for a few weeks in 1886, and in the other direction Lord and Lady Wolseley, who took a house near Milford, and thence made their way occasionally down our sandy track. But the neighbours who meant most to us were, after all, our landlords, the Brodricks of Peper Harow; they were not only endlessly kind, giving us leave to disport ourselves in all

[1] Now Mrs. Arthur Strong, Assistant Director of the British School at Rome.

their ponds, but took a sort of pride of possession, I believe, in their pocket authoress, watching her struggles and her achievement with paternal eyes. And when *Robert Elsmere* at length appeared, old Lord Midleton, pillar of Church and State as he was, came riding over to the farm, sitting his horse squarely in spite of his white hairs and his semi-blindness, and sent in word that the "Wicked Squire" was at the gate!

Two letters written to her father from Borough Farm during these years, give glimpses of her browsings in many books, and of her thoughts on Shakespeare, evolution and kindred matters:

"I have been reading Joubert's *Pensées* and *Correspondance* lately, with a view to the Amiel introduction. You would be charmed with the letters, and some of the *pensées* are extraordinarily acute. Now I am deep in Sénancour, and for miscellaneous reading I have been getting through Horace's Epistles and dawdling a good deal over Shakespeare. My feeling as to him gets stronger and stronger, that he was, strictly speaking, a great poet, but not a great dramatist! There's a remark over which I trust you will draw a fatherly veil! But one can only say what one feels, and I am more oppressed than I used to be by his faults of construction, his carelessness, his excrescences, while at the same time much more sensitive to his preternatural power as a poet and as a psychological analyst. He gets at the root of his characters in a marvellous way, he envisages them separately as no one else can, but it is when he comes to bring them into action to represent the play of outward circumstance and the interaction of character on character that he seems to me comparatively—only comparatively, of course—to fail. I have always felt it most strongly in Othello, and of course in the last act of Hamlet, which, in spite of the magnificent poetry in it, is surely a piece of dramatic bungling. . . .

"As to Renan it would be too long to argue it, but I think he very much saves himself in the passage you quote by the qualifying word 'comme.' The Church is 'as it were' *un débris de l'Empire.* It is only another way of putting what Harnack said in that article you and I read at Sea View. 'The Empire built up the Church out of its own substance, and destroyed itself in so doing,' or words to that

effect. I cannot help feeling that as far as organization and institutions go it is very true, though I would never deny that God was in the Church, as I believe He is in all human society, moulding it to His will. Everything, from the critical and scientific standpoint, seems to me so continuous and natural—no sharp lines anywhere—one thing leading to another, event leading to event, belief to belief—and God enwrapping and enfolding all. But this is one general principle, and yours is quite another. I quite agree that from your standpoint no explanation that Renan could give of the Church can appear other than meagre or grotesque."

Her translation of Amiel's *Journal Intime* was a long and exacting piece of work, but she enjoyed the struggle with the precise meaning of the French phrases and always maintained that she owed much to it, both in her knowledge of French and of English. She had begun it, with the benevolent approval of its French editor, M. Scherer, early in 1884, and took it up again after *Miss Bretherton* came out; found it indeed a far more troublesome task than she had foreseen, and was still wrestling with the Introduction in the summer of 1885, when her head was already full of her new novel, and she was fretting to begin upon it. But the book appeared at length in December, 1885, and very soon made its mark. The wonderful language of the Swiss mystic appealed to a generation more occupied than ours with the things of the soul, while Mrs. Ward's introduction gave a masterly sketch of the writer's strange personality and the development of his mind. As Jowett wrote to her, "Shall I tell you the simple truth? It is wonderful to me how you could have thought and known so much about so many things." Mr. Talbot, the Warden of Keble (now Bishop of Winchester), wrote of the "almost breathless admiration of the truth and penetration of his thought" with which he had read the book, while Lord Arthur Russell reported that he had "met Mr. Gladstone, who spoke with great interest of Amiel, asked me whether I had compared the translation with the original, and said that a most interesting small volume might be extracted, of *Pensées*, quite equal to Pascal."

But it was, inevitably, "caviar to the general." Mrs. Ward's brother, Willie Arnold, her close comrade and

friend in all things literary, wrote to her from Manchester a few months after its appearance : " I served on a jury at the Assizes last week—two murder cases and general horrors. I sat next to a Mr. Amiel—pronounced ' Aymiell ' —a worthy Manchester tradesman ; no doubt his ancestor was a Huguenot refugee. I had one of your vols. in my pocket, and showed him the passage about the family. He was greatly interested, and borrowed it. Returned it next day with the remark that it was ' too religious for him.' Alas, divine philosophy ! "

Ever since the previous winter the idea of a novel in which the clash between the older and the younger types of Christianity should be worked out in terms of human life, had been growing and fermenting in her mind. *Miss Bretherton* and Amiel's *Journal* had given her a valuable apprenticeship in the art of writing, while Amiel's luminous reflections on the decadence and formalism of the churches had tended to confirm her own passionate conviction that all was not well with the established forms of religion. But the determining factor in the writing of *Robert Elsmere* was the close and continuous study which she had given ever since her work for the *Dictionary of Christian Biography* to the problem of " Christian origins." She was fascinated by the intricacy and difficulty of the whole subject, but more especially by such branches of it as the Synoptic Problem, or the relation of the Fourth Gospel to the rest ; while the questions raised by the realization that the Books of the New Testament were the products of an age steeped in miracle and wholly uncritical of the records of it, struck her as vital to the whole orthodox position. At the same time her immense tenderness for Christianity, her belief that the life and teaching of the Founder were still the " master-light of all our seeing," made her yearn for a simplification of the creeds, so that the Message itself should once more appeal to the masses without the intervention of formulæ that perpetually challenged their reason. The argument of " Literature and Dogma " culminates in the picture of mankind waiting for the lifting of the burden of " Aberglaube " and dogmatism, with which the spirit of Christianity had been crushed down for centuries, waiting for the renewal that would come when the old coil was cast off.

It was in that spirit also that Mrs. Ward attacked the problem; her Robert was to her a link in the chain of the liberators of all ages. Was her outlook too intellectual? Did she overestimate the repugnance to obsolete forms that possessed her generation? So it was said by many who rose up in startled defence of those forms, many who had never felt the uttermost clash between the things which they wished to believe and the things which Truth allowed them to believe. Yet still the response of her generation was to be greater than she ever dreamt. No doubt the renewal did not come in the precise form in which she looked for it; creeds were to prove tougher, the worship of the Risen Lord more vital than she thought; yet still, in a hundred ways, the influence of the fermentation caused by the ideas of *Robert Elsmere* may be traced in the Church to-day. "Biblical criticism" may now be out of fashion; but it is because its victory has in reality been won. All this lay hidden from the mind of the writer as she sat toiling over her task in the solitude of Borough Farm, or in the little "powder-closet" overlooking the back gardens of Russell Square; she wrote because she "could no other," and only rarely did she allow herself to feel, with trembling, that the *Zeitgeist* might indeed be with her.

The book was begun in the autumn of 1885, with every hope that it would be finished in less than a year. It was offered, when a few chapters had been written, to the Macmillans for publication, since they had published both *Miss Bretherton* and the *English Poets*, but to the sad disappointment of its author they rejected it on the ground that the subject was not likely to appeal to the British public. In this dilemma Mrs. Ward bethought herself of Mr. George Murray Smith, the publisher of Charlotte Brontë, and in some trepidation offered the book to him. Mr. Smith had greater faith than the Macmillans and accepted it at once, sealing the bargain by making an advance of £200 upon it in May, 1886. So began Mrs. Ward's connection with "George Smith," as she always familiarly spoke of him: a friend and counsellor indeed, to whom she owed incalculable things in the years that followed.

In the Preface to the "Westmorland Edition" of *Robert Elsmere*, issued twenty-three years later, Mrs. Ward herself confessed to her models for some of the principal

characters—to the friend of her youth, Mark Pattison, for the figure of the Squire (though not in his landowning capacity!); to Thomas Hill Green, "the noblest and most persuasive master of philosophic thought in modern Oxford," for that of Henry Grey; and to Amiel himself, the hapless intellectual tortured by the paralysis of will, for that of Langham. Both the Rector of Lincoln and Professor Green had recently died, the latter in the prime of his life and work, and Mrs. Ward sought both in the dedication and in her sketch of the strong and lovable tutor of St. Anselm's, to express her lasting admiration for this lost friend. But she claimed in each case the artist's freedom to treat her creatures as her own, once they had entered the little world of the novel: a thesis which she was to maintain and develop in later years, when she occasionally went to the past for her characters. Catherine was a more composite picture, drawn from the "strong souls" she had known among her own kinswomen from childhood up, and therefore, perhaps, more tenderly treated by the author than the rules of artistic detachment would allow. She was a type far more possible in the 'eighties than now, but it is perhaps comforting to know that no single human being inspired her. As to the scene in which these figures moved, it was on a sunny day at the end of May, 1885, that Mrs. Ward's old friend, Mr. James Cropper, of Ellergreen, took her for a drive up the valley of Long Sleddale, in a lonely part of Westmorland. There she saw the farm at the head of the dale, the vicarage, the Leyburns' house. Already her thoughts were busy with her story, and from that day onwards she peopled the quiet valley with her folk.

At first she was full of hope that the book would be finished before the summer of 1886, although she admits to her mother that "it is very difficult to write and the further I get the harder it is." In March of that year she writes to her sister-in-law: "I have made up my mind to come here [Borough Farm] for the whole of April, so as to get *Robert Elsmere done*! It must and shall be done by the end of April, if I expire in the attempt." In April she did indeed work herself nearly to death, writing sixteen, eighteen and even twenty pages of manuscript in the day, and a sort of confidence began to grow up in her mind that the book would not speak its message in vain. "I think this book

must interest a certain number of people," she writes to her mother; "I certainly feel as if I were writing parts of it with my heart's blood." But the difficulties only increased, and actually it was the end of October before even the first two volumes were finished. And then "the more satisfied I become with the second volume the more discontented I am with the first. It must be re-cast, alas!" Her arm was often troublesome, especially in the autumn of this year, when she was staying at the Forsters' house near Fox How, working very hard. "I am dreadfully low about myself," she writes; "my arm has not been so bad since April, when it took me practically a month's rest to get it right again. I have been literally physically incapable of finishing my last chapter. And to think of all the things I promised myself to do this week! And here I have time, ideas, inclination, and I can do nothing. I will dictate if I can to Gertrude, but I am so discouraged just at present I seem to have no heart for it." Then a few days later it has taken a turn for the better, and she is overjoyed: "The second volume was *finished* last night! The arm is *decidedly* better, though still shaky. I sleep badly, and rheumatism keeps flying about me, now here, now there, but I am not at all doleful—indeed in excellent spirits now that the arm is better!"

So, in spite of the distractions of London, she struggled on with the third volume all through that winter (1886–7), flying for a week in December to Borough Farm in order to get complete isolation for her task. "Oh, the quiet, the blissful quiet of it! It helps me most in thinking out the book. I can *write* in London; I seem to be unable to think." Sometimes, however, her head was utterly exhausted. Returning to London, she wrote to her mother: "I did a splendid day's work yesterday, but it was fighting against headache all day, and this morning I felt quite incapable of writing and have been lying down, reading, though my wretched head is hardly fit for reading. It is not exactly pain, but a horrid feeling of tension and exhaustion, as if one hadn't slept for ever so long, which I don't at all approve of."

Often, when these fits of exhaustion came on, a small person would be sent for from the schoolroom, in whose finger-tips a quaint form of magic was believed to reside, and there she

would sit for an hour, stroking her mother's head, or her hands, or her feet, while the " Jabberwock " on the Chinese cabinet curled his long tail at the pair in silence. " Chatter to me," she used to say ; but this was not always easy, and a golden and friendly silence, peopled by many thoughts, usually lay between the two.

At length, on March 9, 1887, the last words of the third volume were written, there in the little powder-closet behind the back drawing-room. But this did not mean the end. She was already painfully aware that the book was too long, and Mr. George Smith, best and truest of advisers, firmly indicated to her that the limits even of a three-volume novel had been overstepped. She herself had already admitted to her brother Willie that it was " not a novel at all," and she now plunged bravely into the task of cutting and revision, fondly hoping that it would take her no more than a fortnight's hard work. Instead it took her the best part of a year. Publication first in the summer season, then in the autumn, had to be given up, while her own fatigue increased so that sometimes for days together she could not touch the book. The few friends to whom she showed it were indeed encouraging, and her brother Willie was the first to prophesy that it would " make a great mark." After reading the first volume he wrote to Mrs. Arnold, " You may look forward to finding yourself the mother of a famous woman ! " But the mood of this year was one of depression, while Mrs. Arnold's illness became an ever-increasing sorrow. In the Long Vacation Mrs. Ward took the empty Lady Margaret Hall, at Oxford, for a few weeks, in order to be near her mother—a step which brought her unexpectedly another pleasure. On the very day after they arrived she wrote : " I have had a great pleasure to-day, for at three o'clock arrived a note from Jowett saying that he was in Oxford for a day and would I come to tea ? So I went down at five, stayed an hour, then he insisted on walking up here, and sat in the garden watching the children play tennis till about seven. Dear old man ! I have the most lively and filial affection for him. We talked about all sorts of things—Cornwall, politics, St. Paul—and when I wanted to go he would not let me. I think he liked it, and certainly I did."

Through the autumn and into the month of January,

1888, she struggled with mountains of proofs, while Mr. Smith, though without much faith in the popular prospects of the book, was always "kind and indulgent," as she gratefully testifies in the *Recollections*. At length, towards the end of January, she sent in the last batch, and on February 24 the book appeared.

Six weeks later, in the little house in Bradmore Road, which had witnessed so many years of suffering indomitably borne, Julia Arnold lay dying. Through pain and exhaustion unspeakable she had yet kept her intense interest in the human scene, and now the last pleasure which she enjoyed on earth was the news that reached her of the growing success of her daughter's book. With a hand so weak that the pen kept falling from her fingers, she wrote her an account of the Oxford gossip on it; she asked her, with a flash of the old malice, to let her know at once should she hear what any of her aunts were saying. Alas, Julia knew better than anyone else on earth what the religious temperament of the Arnolds might mean; but before the answer came her poor tormented spirit was at rest for ever.

CHAPTER IV

ROBERT ELSMERE AND AFTER
1888–1889

THREE volumes, printed as closely as were those of *Robert Elsmere*, penetrated somewhat slowly among the fraternity of reviewers. The *Scotsman* and the *Morning Post* were the first to notice it on March 5, nine days after its appearance; the *British Weekly* wept over it on March 9; the *Academy* compared it to *Adam Bede* on the 17th; the *Manchester Guardian* gave it two columns on the 21st; the *Saturday* "slated" it on the 24th; while Walter Pater's article in the Church *Guardian* on the 28th, calling it a "*chef d'œuvre* of that kind of quiet evolution of character through circumstance, introduced into English literature by Miss Austen and carried to perfection in France by George Sand," gave perhaps greater happiness to its author than any other review. *The Times* waited till April 7, being in no hurry to show favour to one connected with its staff, but when it came the review duly spoke of *Robert* as "a clever attack upon revealed religion," and all was well. By the end of March, however, the public interest in the book had begun in earnest; the first edition of 500 copies was exhausted and a second had appeared; this was sold out by the middle of April; a third appeared on April 19 and was gone within a week; a fourth followed in the same way. Matthew Arnold wrote from Wilton, the Pembrokes' house, a week before his death (which occurred on April 15), that he found all the guests there reading or intending to read it, and added, "George Russell, who was staying at Aston Clinton with Gladstone, says it is all true about his interest in the book. He talked of it incessantly and said he thought he should review it for Knowles."

As a matter of fact, Mr. Gladstone had already written

the first draft of his article and was corresponding with Lord Acton on the various points which he wished to raise or to drive home. His biographer hints that Acton's replies were not too encouraging. But the old giant was not to be deterred. The book had moved him profoundly and he felt impelled to combat the all too dangerous conclusions to which it pointed. "Mamma and I," he wrote to his daughter in March, "are each of us still separately engaged in a death-grapple with *Robert Elsmere*. I complained of some of the novels you gave me to read as too stiff, but they are nothing to this. It is wholly out of the common order. At present I regard with doubt and dread the idea of doing anything on it, but cannot yet be sure whether your observations will be verified or not. In any case it is a tremendous book." And to Lord Acton he wrote: "It is not far from twice the length of an ordinary novel; and the labour and effort of reading it all, I should say, sixfold; while one could no more stop in it than in reading Thucydides." Early in April he came to Oxford to stay with the Edward Talbots at Keble College, and hearing that Mrs. Ward was also there, watching over her dying mother, he expressed a desire to see her, and, if possible, to talk the book over with her. She came on the day after her mother's death—April 8—towards evening, and waited for him alone in the Talbots' drawing-room. That night she wrote down the following account of their conversation:

"I arrived at Keble at 7.10. Gladstone was not in the drawing-room. I waited for about three minutes when I heard his slow step coming downstairs. He came in with a candle in his hand which he put out, then he came up most cordially and quickly. 'Mrs. Ward—this is most good of you to come and see me! If you had not come, I should myself have ventured to call and ask after yourself and Mr. Arnold.'

"Then he sat down, he on a small uncomfortable chair, where he fidgeted greatly! He began to ask about Mamma. Had there been much suffering? Was death peaceful? I told him. He said that though he had seen many deaths, he had never seen any really peaceful. In all there had been much struggle. So much so that 'I myself have conceived what I will not call a terror

of death, but a repugnance from the idea of death. It is the rending asunder of body and soul, the tearing apart of the two elements of our nature—for I hold the body to be an essential element as well as the soul, not a mere sheath or envelope.' He instanced the death of Sidney Herbert as an exception. *He* had said 'can this indeed be dying?'—death had come so gently.

"Then after a pause he began to speak of the knowledge of Oxford shown by *Robert Elsmere*, and we went on to discuss the past and present state of Oxford. He mentioned it 'as one of the few points on which, outside Home Rule, I disagree with Hutton,'[1] that Hutton had given it as his opinion that Cardinal Newman and Matthew Arnold had had more influence than any other men on modern Oxford. Newman's influence had been supreme up to 1845—nothing since, and he gathered from Oxford men that Professor Jowett and Mr. Green had counted for much more than Matthew Arnold. M.A.'s had been an influence on the general public, not on the Universities. How Oxford had been torn and rent, what a 'long agony of thought' she had gone through! How different from Cambridge!

"Then we talked again of Newman, how he had possessed the place, his influence comparable only to that of Abelard on Paris—the flatness after he left. I quoted Burne-Jones on the subject. Then I spoke of Pattison's autobiography as illustrating Newman's hold. He agreed, but said that Pattison's religious phase was so disagreeable and unattractive that it did small credit to Newman. He would much like to have seen more of the autobiography, but he understood that the personalities were too strong. I asked him if he had seen Pattison's last 'Confession of Faith,' which Mrs. Pattison decided not to print, in MS. He said no. Then he asked me whether I had pleasant remembrances of Pattison. I warmly said yes, and described how kind he had been to me as a girl. 'Ah!' he said—'Church would never cast him off; and Church is almost the only person of whom he really speaks kindly in the Memoirs.'

"Then, from the state of Oxford, we passed to the state of the country during the last half-century. 'It has

[1] The Editor of the *Spectator*.

been a *wonderful* half-century! I often tell the young men who are coming on that we have had a better time than they can have, in the next half-century. Take one thing only—the abolition of slavery in the world (outside Africa I suppose he meant). You are too young to realize what that means. But I draw a distinction between the first twenty-five years of the period and the second; during the first, steady advance throughout all classes, during the second, distinct recession, and retrogression, in the highest class of all. That testing point, *marriage*, very disquieting. The scandals about marriage in the last twenty years unparallelled in the first half of the period. I don't trust my own opinion, but I asked two of the keenest social observers, and two of the coolest heads I ever knew—Lord Granville and the late Lord Clanwilliam—to tell me what they thought and they strongly confirmed my impression.' (Here one of the Talbot boys came in and stood by the fire, and Gladstone glanced at him once or twice, as though conversation on these points was difficult while he was there.) I suggested that more was made of scandals nowadays by the newspapers. But he would not have it—'When I was a boy—I left Eton in 1827—there were two papers, the *Age* and the *Satirist*, worse than anything which exists now. But they died out about 1830, and for about forty years there was *nothing of the kind*. Then sprang up this odious and deplorable crop of Society papers.' He thought the fact significant.

"He talked of the modern girl. 'They tell me she is not what she was—that she loves to be fast. I don't know. All I can bear testimony to is the girl of my youth. *She* was excellent!'

"'But,' I asked him, 'in spite of all drawbacks, do you not see a gradual growth and diffusion of earnestness, of the social passion during the whole period?' He assented, and added, 'With the decline of the Church and State spirit, with the slackening of State religion, there has unquestionably come about a quickening of the State conscience, of the *social* conscience. I will not say what inference should be drawn.'

"Then we spoke of charity in London, and of the way in which the rich districts had elbowed out their poor.

And thereupon—perhaps through talk of the *motives* for charitable work—we came to religion. 'I don't believe in any new system,' he said, smiling, and with reference to *Robert Elsmere*; 'I cling to the old. The great traditions are what attract me. I believe in a degeneracy of man, in the Fall—in *sin*—in the intensity and virulence of sin. No other religion but Christianity meets the sense of sin, and sin is the great fact in the world to me.'

"I suggested that though I did not wish for a moment to deny the existence of moral evil, the more one thought of it the more plain became its connection with physical and social and therefore *removable* conditions. He disagreed, saying that the worst forms of evil seemed to him to belong to the highest and most favoured class 'of *educated* people'—with some emphasis.

I asked him whether it did not give him any confidence in 'a new system'—i.e. a new construction of Christianity—to watch its effect on such a life as T. H. Green's. He replied individuals were no test; one must take the broad mass. Some men were born 'so that sin never came near them. Such men never felt the need of Christianity. They would be better if they were worse!'

"And as to difficulties, the great difficulties of all lay in the way of Theism. 'I am surprised at men who don't feel this—I am surprised at you!' he said, smiling. Newman had put these difficulties so powerfully in the *Apologia*. The Christian system satisfied all the demands of the conscience; and as to the intellectual difficulties—well there we came to the question of miracles.

"Here he restated the old argument against an *a priori* impossibility of miracles. Granted a God, it is absurd to limit the scope and range of the *will* of such a being. I agreed; then I asked him to let me tell him how I had approached the question—through a long immersion in documents of the early Church, in critical and historical questions connected with miracles. I had come to see how miracles arise, and to feel it impossible to draw the line with any rigidity between one miraculous story and another.

"'The difficulty is'—he said slowly, 'if you sweep away miracles, you sweep away *the Resurrection*! With regard to the other miracles, I no longer feel as I once

did that they are the most essential evidence for Christianity. The evidence which now comes *nearest* to me is the evidence of Christian history, of the type of character Christianity has produced——'

"Here the Talbots' supper bell rang, and the clock struck eight. He said in the most cordial way it was impossible it could be so late, that he must not put the Warden's household out, but that our conversation could not end there, and would I come again? We settled 9.30 in the morning. He thanked me, came with me to the hall and bade me a most courteous and friendly good-bye." [1]

The next morning she duly presented herself after breakfast, and this time they got to grips far more thoroughly than before with the question of miracles and of New Testament criticism generally. In a letter to her husband (published in the *Recollections*) she calls it "a battle royal over the book and Christian evidences," and describes how "at times he looked stern and angry and white to a degree, so that I wondered sometimes how I had the courage to go on—the drawn brows were so formidable!" But she stuck to her points and found, as she thought, that for all his versatility he was not really familiar with the literature of the subject, but took refuge instead in attacking her own Theistic position, divested as it was of supernatural Christianity. "I do not say or think you 'attack' Christianity," he wrote to her two days later, "but in proposing a substitute for it, reached by reduction and negation, I think (forgive me) you are dreaming the most visionary of all human dreams."

He enclosed a volume of his *Gleanings*, marking the article on "The Courses of Religious Thought." Mrs. Ward replied to him as follows:—

April 15, 1888.

DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,—

Thank you very much for the volume of *Gleanings* with its gracious inscription. I have read the article you point out to me with the greatest interest, and shall do

[1] This conversation has already appeared once in print, as an Appendix to the Westmorland Edition of *Robert Elsmere*.

the same with the others. Does not the difference between us on the question of sin come very much to this—that to you the great fact in the world and in the history of man, is *sin*—to me, *progress*? I remember Amiel somewhere speaks of the distinction as marking off two classes of thought, two orders of temperament. In myself I see a perpetual struggle, in the world also, but through it all I feel the "Power that makes for righteousness." In the life of conscience, in the play of physical and moral law, I see the ordained means by which sin is gradually scourged and weakened both in the individual and in the human society. And as to that sense of *irreparableness*, that awful burden of evil both on the self and outside it, for which all religions have sought an anodyne in the ceremonies of propitiation and sacrifice, I think the modern who believes in God and cherishes the dear memory of a human Christ will learn humbly, as Amiel says, even "to accept himself," and life, as they are, at God's hands. Constant and recurrent experience teaches him that the baser self can only be killed by constant and recurrent effort towards good; the action of the higher self is governed by an even stronger and more prevailing law of self-preservation than that of the lower; evil finds its appointed punishment and deterrent in pain and restlessness; and as the old certainty of the Christian heaven fades it will become clear to him that his only hope of an immortality worth having lies in the developing and maturing of that diviner part in him which can conceive and share the divine life—of the soul. And for the rest, he will trust in the indulgence and pity of the power which brought forth this strangely mingled world.

So much for the minds capable of such ideas. For the masses, in the future, it seems to me that charitable and social organization will be all-important. If the simpler Christian ideas can clothe themselves in such organization —and I believe they can and are even now beginning to do it—their effect on the democracy may be incalculable. If not, then God will fulfil Himself in other ways. But "dream" as it may be, it seems to many of us, a dream worth trying to realize in a world which contains your seven millions of persons in France, who will have nothing to say to religious beliefs, or the 200,000 persons in South

London alone, amongst whom, according to the *Record*, Christianity has practically no existence.

And the letter ends with a plea that the faith which animated T. H. Green might fitly be described by the words of the Psalm, "my soul is athirst for God, for the living God."

To this Mr. Gladstone replied immediately:

St. James's Street.
April 16, 1888.

My dear Mrs. Ward,—

I do not at all doubt that your conception of *Robert Elsmere* includes much of what is expressed in the opening verses of Psalm 42. I am more than doubtful whether he could impart it to Elgood St., and I wholly disbelieve that Elgood St. could hand it on from generation to generation. You have much courage, but I doubt whether even you are brave enough to think that, fourteen centuries after its foundation, Elgood St. could have written the *Imitation of Christ.*

And my meaning about Mr. Green was to hint at what seems to me the unutterable strangeness of his passionately beseeching philosophy to open to him the communion for which he thirsted, when he had a better source nearer hand.

It is like a farmer under the agricultural difficulty who has to migrate from England and plants himself in the middle of the Sahara.

But I must abstain from stimulating you. At Oxford I sought to avoid pricking you and rather laid myself open—because I thought it not fair to ask you for statements which might give me points for reply.

Mr. Gladstone evidently believed he had been as mild as milk—he knew not the terror of his own "drawn brows!"

Mrs. Ward to Mr. Gladstone.

April 17, 1888.

I think I must write a few words in answer to your letter of yesterday, in view of your approaching article

which fills me with so much interest and anxiety. If I put what I have to say badly or abruptly, please forgive me. My thoughts are so full of this terrible loss of my dear uncle Matthew Arnold, to whom I was deeply attached, that it seems difficult to turn to anything else.

And yet I feel a sort of responsibility laid upon me with regard to Mr. Green, whom you may possibly mention in your article. There are many people living who can explain his thought much better than I can. But may I say with regard to your letter of yesterday, that in turning to philosophy, that is to the labour of reason and thought, for light on the question of man's whence and whither, Mr. Green as I conceive it, only obeyed an urgent and painful necessity. "The parting with the Christian mythology is the rending asunder of bones and marrow"—words which I have put into Grey's mouth—were words of Mr. Green's to me. It was the only thing of the sort I ever heard him say—he was a man who never spoke of his feelings—but it was said with a penetrating force and sincerity which I still remember keenly. A long intellectual travail had convinced him that the miraculous Christian story was untenable; but speculatively he gave it up with grief and difficulty, and practically, to his last hour, he clung to all the forms and associations of the old belief with a wonderful affection. With regard to conformity to Church usage and repression of individual opinion he and I disagreed a good deal.

If you do speak of him, will you look at his two Lay Sermons, of which I enclose my copy?—particularly the second one, which was written eight years after the first, and to my mind expresses his thought more clearly.

Some of the letters which have reached me lately about the book have been curious and interesting. A vicar of a church in the East End, who seems to have been working among the poor for forty years, says, "I could not help writing; in your book you seemed to grasp me by the hand and follow me right on through my own life experiences." And an Owens College Professor, who appears to have thought and read much of these things, writes to a third person, à propos of Elsmere, that the book has grasped "the real force at work in driving so many to give up the Christian creed. It is not the

scientific (in the loose modern sense of the word), still less the philosophical difficulties, which influence them, but it is the education of the historic sense which is disintegrating faith."—Only the older forms of faith, as I hold, that the new may rise! But I did not mean to speak of myself.

When the famous article—entitled "Robert Elsmere and the Battle of Belief"—appeared in the May *Nineteenth Century*, there was nothing but courtesy between the two opponents. Mrs. Ward sent the G.O.M. a copy of the book, with a picture of Catherine's valley bound into it, and he replied that the volumes would "form a very pleasant recollection of what I trust has been a 'tearless battle.'" Many of the papers now reviewed both book and article together, and the *Pall Mall* ironically congratulated the Liberal Party on "Mr. Gladstone's new preoccupation." "For two and a half years," it declared, the G.O.M. had been able to think of nothing but Home Rule and Ireland. "But Mrs. Ward has changed all that." The excitement among the reading public was very great. It penetrated even to the streets, for one of us overheard a panting lady, hugging a copy of the *Nineteenth Century*, saying to her companion as she fought her way into an omnibus, "Oh, my dear, *have* you read Weg on Bobbie?" Naturally the sale received a fresh stimulus. Two more three-volume editions disappeared during May, and a seventh and last during June. Then there was a pause before the appearance of the Popular or 6*s*. edition, which came out at the end of July with an impression of 5,000. It was immediately bought up; 7,000 more were disposed of during August, and the sale went on till the end of the year at the rate of about 4,000 a month. Even during 1889 it continued steadily, until by January, 1890, 44,000 copies of the 6*s*. edition had been sold. But as the sale had then slackened Mr. Smith decided to try the experiment of a half-crown edition. 20,000 of this were sold by the following November, but the drop had already set in and during 1891 the total only rose to 23,000. But even so, the sale of these three editions in the United Kingdom alone had amounted to 70,500.

All through the spring and summer of 1888 letters poured in upon Mrs. Ward by the score and the hundred, both

from known and unknown correspondents, so that her husband and sister-in-law had almost to build a hedge around her and to insist that she should not answer them all herself. Those which the book provoked from her old friends, however, especially those of more orthodox views than her own, were often of poignant interest. The Warden of Keble wrote her six sheets of friendly argument and remonstrance. Mr. Creighton wrote her a letter full of closely reasoned criticism of Elsmere's position, to which she made the following reply:

March 13, 1888.

MY DEAR MAX,—

I have been deeply interested by your letter, and am very grateful to you for the fairness and candour of it. Perhaps it is an affectation to say always that one likes candour!—but I certainly like it from you, and should be aggrieved if you did not give it me.

I think you only evade the whole issue raised by the book when you say that Elsmere was never a Christian. Of course in the case of every one who goes through such a change, it is easy to say this; it is extremely difficult to prove it; and all probability is against its being true in every case. What do you really fall back upon when you say that if Elsmere had been a Christian he could not have been influenced as he was? Surely on the "inward witness." But the "inward witness," or as you call it "the supernatural life," belongs to every religion that exists. The Andaman islander even believes himself filled by his God, the devout Buddhist and Mahommedan certainly believe themselves under divine and supernatural direction, and have been inspired by the belief to heroic efforts and sufferings. What is, in essence and fundamentally, to distinguish your "inner witness" from theirs? And if the critical observer maintains that this "supernatural life" is in all cases really an intense life of the imagination, differently peopled and conditioned, what answer have you?

None, unless you appeal to the facts and *fruits* of Christianity. The Church has always done so. Only the Quaker or the Quietist can stand mainly on the "inward witness."

The fruits we are not concerned with. But it is as

to the *facts* that Elsmere and, as I conceive, our whole modern time is really troubled. An acute Scotch economist was talking to Humphry the other day about the religious change in the Scotch lowlands. "It is so pathetic," he said: "when I was young religion was the main interest, the passionate occupation of the whole people. Now when I go back there, as I constantly do, I find everything changed. The old keenness is gone, the people's minds are turning to other things; there is a restless consciousness, coming they know not whence, but invading every stratum of life, that *the evidence is not enough.*" There, on another scale, is Elsmere's experience writ large. Why is he to be called "very ill-trained," and his impressions "accidental" because he undergoes it? . . . What convinced *me* finally and irrevocably was two years of close and constant occupation with the materials of history in those centuries which lie near to the birth of Christianity, and were the critical centuries of its development. I then saw that to adopt the witness of those centuries to matters of fact, without translating it at every step into the historical language of our own day—a language which the long education of time has brought closer to the realities of things—would be to end by knowing nothing, actually and truly, about their life. And if one is so to translate Augustine and Jerome, nay even Suetonius and Tacitus, when they talk to you of raisings from the dead, and making blind men to see, why not St. Paul and the Synoptics?

I don't think you have ever felt this pressure, though within the limits of your own work I notice that you are always so translating the language of the past. But those who have, cannot escape it by any appeal to the "inward witness." They too, or many of them, still cling to a religious life of the imagination, nay perhaps they live for it, but it must be one where the expansive energies of life and reason cannot be always disturbing and tormenting, which is less vulnerable and offers less prey to the plunderer than that which depends on the orthodox Christian story.

Another old friend, Mrs. Edward Conybeare, wrote to

contend that the "mere life and death of the carpenter's son of Nazareth could never have proved the vast historical influence for good which you allow it to be," had that life ended in

"nothing but a Syrian grave."

Mrs. Ward replied to her as follows:—

May 16, 1888.

My dear Frances,

It was very interesting to me to get your letter about *Robert Elsmere*. I wish we could have a good talk about it. Writing is very difficult to me, for the letters about it are overwhelming, and I am always as you know more or less hampered by writer's cramp.

I am thinking of "A Conversation" for one of the summer numbers of the *Nineteenth Century*, in which some of the questions which are only suggested in the book may be carried a good deal further. For the more I think and read the more plain the great lines of that distant past become to me, the more clearly I see God at work there, through the forms of thought, the beliefs, the capacities of the first three centuries, as I see Him at work now, through the forms of thought, the beliefs and capacities of our own. Christianity was the result of many converging lines of thought and development. The time was ripe for a moral revolution, and a great personality, and the great personality came. That a life of importance and far-reaching influence could have been lived within the sphere of religion at that moment, or for centuries afterwards, without undergoing a process of miraculous amplification, would, I think, have been impossible. The generations before and the generations after supply illustration after illustration of it. That Jesus, our dear Master, partly shared this tendency of his time and was partly bewildered and repelled by it, is very plain to me.

As to the belief in the Resurrection, I have many things to say about it, and shall hope to say them in public when I have pondered them long enough. But I long to say them not negatively, for purposes of attack, but positively,

for purposes of reconstruction. It is about the new forms of faith and the new grounds of combined action that I really care intensely. I want to challenge those who live in doubt and indecision from year's end to year's end, to think out the matter, and for their children's sake to count up what remains to them, and to join frankly for purposes of life and conduct with those who are their spiritual fellows. It is the levity or the cowardice that will not think, or the indolence and self-indulgence that is only too glad to throw off restraints, which we have to fear. But in truth for religion, or for the future, I have no fear at all. God is his own vindication in human life.

But apart from the religious argument, the characters in *Robert Elsmere* aroused the greatest possible interest, especially perhaps that of Catherine.

"As an observer of the human ant-hill, quite impartial by this time," wrote Prof. Huxley, "I think your picture of one of the deeper aspects of our troubled times admirable. You are very hard on the philosophers: I do not know whether Langham or the Squire is the more unpleasant—but I have a great deal of sympathy with the latter, so I hope he is not the worse.

"If I may say so, I think the picture of Catherine is the gem of the book. She reminds me of her namesake of Siena—and would as little have failed in any duty, however gruesome. You remember Sodoma's picture?"

The appreciation of her French friends was always very dear to Mrs. Ward, and amongst them too the book was eagerly read by a small circle, though, as Scherer warned her, the subject could never become a popular one in France. But both he and M. Taine were greatly excited by it, while M. André Michel of the Louvre, to whom she had entrusted the copy which she desired to present to M. Taine, wrote her a delightful account of his embassy:

PARIS.
ce 31 *janvier*, 1889.

CHERE MADAME,—

Votre lettre m'a été une bien agréable surprise et une bien intéressante lecture. Je l'ai immédiatement com-

muniquée à M. Taine, en lui remettant l'exemplaire que vous lui destiniez de *Robert Elsmere* et je vous avoue qu'en me rendant chez lui à cet effet, je me *rengorgeais* un peu, très-fier de servir d'intermédiaire entre l'auteur de *Robert Elsmere* et celui de la *Littérature Anglaise.* L'âne portant des reliques chez son évèque ne marchait pas plus solennellement !

M. Taine a été très-touché de cet hommage venant de vous, et je pense qu'il vous en a déjà remercié lui-même. J'aurais voulu que vous eussiez pu entendre—incognito—avec quelle vivacité de sympathie et d'admiration il parlait de votre livre. Pendant plusieurs jours, il n'a pas été question d'autre chose chez lui.

The cumulative effect of all these letters, both approving and disapproving ; of the preachings on Robert's opinions that began with Mr. Haweis in May, and continued at intervals throughout the summer ; of the general atmosphere of celebrity that began to surround her, was extremely upsetting to so sensitive a nature as Mrs. Ward's, and much of it was and remained distasteful to her. But fame had its lighter sides. There were the inevitable sonnets, beginning

"I thank you, Lady, for your book so pure,"

or

"Hail to thee, gentle leader, puissant knight!"—

there were inquiries as to the address of the "New Brotherhood of Christ," "so that next time we are in London we may attend some of its meetings," and there was a gentleman who demanded to know "the opus no. of the Andante and Scherzo of Beethoven mentioned on p. 239, and of Hans Sachs's Immortal Song quoted on p. 177. I am in want of a little fresh music for one of my daughters and shall esteem your kind reply." And finally there was the following letter, which must be transcribed in full :

DEAR MADAM,—

Trusting to your Clemency, in seeking your advice, knowing my sphere in life, to be so far below your's. My Mother, who is a Cook-Housekeeper, but very fond of

Literature, Poetry ("unfortunately"), in her younger days brought out a small volume, upon her own account, a copy of which Her Majesty graciously accepted. Tennyson considered it most "meritorious," Caryle most "creditable." But what I am asking your advice upon is her "Autography," her Cook's Career, which has been a checquered one. She feels quite sure, that if it were brought out by an abler hand, it would be widely sought and read, at least by two classes "my Ladies" and Cooks. The matter would be truth, names and places strictously ficticous. With much admiration and respect,

I am, Madam,
Yours Obiediently,
A. A.

History does not record what reply Mrs. Ward made to this interesting proposal, but no doubt she took it all as part of the great and amusing game that Fate was playing with her. As to that game—"I have still constant letters and reviews," she wrote to her father on July 17, "and have been more lionized this last month than ever.—But a little lionizing goes a long way! One's sense of humour protests, not to speak of anything more serious, and I shall be *very* glad to get to Borough next week. As to my work, it is all in uncertainty. For the present Miss Sellers is coming to me in the country, and I shall work hard at Latin and Greek, especially the Greek of the New Testament."

And to her old friend, Mrs. Johnson, she wrote: "Being lionized, dear Bertha, is the foolishest business on earth; I have just had five weeks of it, and if I don't use it up in a novel some day it's a pity. The book has been strangely, wonderfully successful and has made me many new friends. But I love my old ones so much best!" This latter sentiment is expressed again in a letter to Mr. Ward: "Strange how tenacious are one's first friendships! No other friends can ever be to me quite like Charlotte or Louise or Bertha or Clara.[1] They know all there is to know, bad and good—and with them one is always at ease."

That autumn they went off on a round of visits, staying first at Merevale with Mrs. Dugdale, whose husband had

[1] Mrs. T. H. Green; Mrs. Creighton; Mrs. A. H. Johnson; Miss Pater.

been killed three years before in his own mine near by—a story of simple heroism which moved Mrs. Ward profoundly, so that years afterwards she used it in her own tale of *George Tressady*. Then to Sir Robert and Lady Cunliffe, with whom they went over to see the " old wizard " of Hawarden, and spent a wonderful hour in his company.

To her old friend, J. R. Thursfield (a staunch Home Ruler), she wrote the following account of it :

September 14, 1888.

" Where do you think we spent the afternoon of the day before yesterday ? You would have been *so* much worthier of it than we ! The Cunliffes took us over to tea at Hawarden and the G.O.M. was delightful. First of all he showed us the old Norman keep, skipping up the steps in a way to make a Tory positively ill to see, talking of every subject under the sun—Sir Edward Watkin and their new line of railway, border castles, executions in the sixteenth century, Villari's *Savonarola*, Damiens and his tortures—' all for sticking half-an-inch of penknife into that beast Louis XV ! '—modern poetry, Tupper, Lewis Morris, Lord Houghton and Heaven knows what besides, and all with a charm, a courtesy, an *élan*, an eagle glance of eye that sent regretful shivers down one's Unionist backbone. He showed us all his library—his literary table, and his political table, and his new toy, the strong fire-proof room he has just built to hold his 60,000 letters, the papers which will some day be handed over to his biographer. His vigour both of mind and body was astonishing—he may well talk, as he did, of ' the foolish dogmatism which refuses to believe in centenarians.' "

À propos of this last remark, Mrs. Ward filled in the tale on her return by telling us how he turned upon her with flashing eye and demanded : " Did it ever occur to you, Mrs. Ward, that Lord Palmerston was Prime Minister at 81 ? " He himself was to surpass that record by returning to power at 82.

From the Cunliffes' they also made an expedition to the Peak country, which Mrs. Ward wished to explore for purposes of her next book (*David Grieve*), now already taking shape in her mind—and then travelled up to Scotland to stay at a great house to whose mistress, Lady Wemyss,

she was devoted. From one who was afterwards to be known as the portrayer of English country-house life the following impressions may be of interest:

To Mrs. A. H. Johnson

Fox Ghyll, Ambleside,

October 21, 1888.

. . . Yes, we had many visits and on the whole very pleasant ones. In Derbyshire I saw a farm and a moorland which I shall try to make the British public see some day. Then on we went to the Lyulph Stanleys', saw them, and Castle Howard and Rivaulx, and journeyed on by the coast to Redcar and the Hugh Bells. There we found Alice Green, and had a merry time. Afterwards came a week at Gosford, whereof the pleasure was mixed. Lady Wemyss I love more than ever, but the party in the house was large and very smart, and with the best will in the world on both sides it is difficult for plain literary folk who don't belong to it to get much entertainment out of a circle where everybody is cousin of everybody else, and on Christian name terms, and where the women at any rate, though pleasant enough, are taken up with "places," jewels and Society with a big S. I don't mean to be unfair. Most of them are good and kindly, and have often unsuspected "interests," but naturally the paraphernalia of their position plays a large part in their lives, and makes a sort of hedge round them through which it is hard to get at the genuine human being.

Perhaps our most delightful visit was a Saturday to Monday with Mr. Balfour, at Whittinghame. There life is lived, intellectually, on the widest and freest of all possible planes, and the master of it all is one to whom nature has given a peculiar charm and magnetism, in addition to all that he has made for himself by toil and trouble.

. . . I am a little disturbed by the announcement of a *Quarterly* article on *R.E.* It must be hostile—perhaps an attack in the old *Quarterly* fashion: well, if so I shall be in good company! But I don't want to have to answer—I want to be free to think new thoughts and imagine fresh things."

When the *Quarterly* article appeared a few days later she found it courteous enough in tone, but its attitude of complacent superiority towards the whole critical process, which it described as "a phase of thought long ago lived through and practically dead," stung her to action and made her feel that some reply—to this and Gladstone together—was now unavoidable. She owed it to her own position—not as a scholar, for she never claimed that title, but as an interpreter of scholars and their work to the modern public. But "If I do reply," she wrote to her husband, "I shall make it as substantive and constructive as possible. All the attacking, destructive part is so distasteful to me. I can only go through with it as a necessary element in a whole which is not negative but positive." But she could not be induced even by Mr. Knowles's persuasions to make it a regular "reply" to Mr. Gladstone, whose name is not once mentioned throughout the article [1]; she threw her argument instead into dialogue form, so keeping the artistic ground which she had used in the novel, and replying to the *Quarterly* or to the G.O.M. rather by allusion than by direct argument. The article was very widely read and certainly carried her cause a stage further; it was felt that here was something that had come to stay, that must be reckoned with, and her skilful use of the admissions made in the Church Congress that year as to the date and authorship of certain books of the Old Testament filled her readers with a vague feeling that perhaps after all these things must be faced for the New Testament also.

Meanwhile in America the hubbub produced by *Robert Elsmere* had far exceeded anything that occurred on this side of the Atlantic. Those were the days before International Copyright, when any American publisher was free to issue the works of British authors without their consent and without payment, and when if an "authorized edition" was issued by some reputable firm which had paid the author for his rights, it could be undersold the next day by some adventurous "pirate." Messrs. Macmillan had bought the American rights of *Robert Elsmere* for a small sum and had issued it at $1.50 in April, but as soon as it began to excite attention, and especially after the appearance

[1] "The New Reformation," *Nineteenth Century*, January, 1889.

of Gladstone's article, the pirate firms rushed in and raged furiously with each other and with Macmillan's to get the book out at the lowest possible price. One firm—Messrs. Lowell & Co.—which had sold tens of thousands of copies, magnanimously sent the author a cheque for £100, but this was the only payment which Mrs. Ward ever received for *Robert Elsmere* from an American publisher. Some of the incidents of the internecine war between the pirates themselves for control of the *Robert Elsmere* market are still worth recording. They were summed up in a well-informed article in the *Manchester Guardian* in March, 1889, entitled *The "Book-Rats" of the United States:*

"In America the publisher's lot is not a happy one. If he is honest, he pays his author, and upon the first assurance of success sees nine-tenths of his lawful profits swept away by the incursions of pirates. If he is dishonest, he does not pay his author, but in hot haste reprints in cheap and nasty material, with one object alone—to undersell the legitimate publisher. A host more follow suit with new reprints in still cheaper and nastier material, till, under the pretence of giving cheap literature to the million, the culminating point is reached in the man who sells at a quarter of cost price to drive his rivals out of the field. This is what happened the other day in Boston over the sale of *Robert Elsmere*, a book which has there achieved an unparalleled success, and abundantly illustrates the inequality of the present system of no copyright. In England between thirty and forty thousand copies have already been sold in the nine months since it was published, and the book is selling steadily at the rate of some 700 a week. In America the sale is estimated at 200,000 copies, of which 150,000 are in pirated editions. One honest pirate purges his conscience by the magnificent gift of £100, which is likely to be the first and last instalment of that 'handsome competence which the American reading public,' says a Rhode Island newspaper, 'owes to Mrs. Ward.' A hundred pounds, representing just one shilling and fourpence per hundred copies upon all the pirated editions! And the author must be thankful for such mercies; rights she has none over her own creation, which pervades the

States from end to end, and is not only a library in itself, but has called into existence so much polemical literature that a leading New York paper gives solemn warning to contributors that for the future sermons on *Robert Elsmere* will only be published at the ordinary advertisement rates. A Buffalo advertisement cries, 'Who has yet touched *Robert Elsmere* at ten cents?' only to be taken down by Jordan Marsh and Co., the 'Whiteleys' of Boston, who offered the book at four cents. Twopence for a book which extents over 400 pages in close-printed octavo! The stroke told, almost too successfully for its contrivers. It is said that next day the shop doors were besieged by a crowd like the surging throng at the entrance to the Lyceum pit on a first night. A queue extended across the street. For three days the enterprising pirate had the field to himself; then he raised his price again; he had lost some ten cents on every copy, but he had crushed his rivals."

The achievement of one still more enterprising firm, however, escaped the notice of this correspondent. The Balsam Fir Soap Co., being anxious to launch their new soap upon the market, made the following announcement:

TO THE PUBLIC

We beg to announce that we have purchased an edition of the Hyde Park Company's *Robert Elsmere*, and also their edition of *Robert Elsmere and the Battle of Belief*—a criticism by the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, M.P.

These two books will be presented to each purchaser of a single cake of Balsam Fir Soap.

Respectfully,
THE MAINE BALSAM FIR CO.

Thus was poor Robert, with his doubts and dreams, his labours and his faith, given away with a cake of soap!

But this was not all, nor even the worst. When the boom was still at its height, in the spring of 1889, Mrs. Ward was horrified to hear that a full-blown dramatized version of the book, by William Gillette, had actually been produced in Boston, with a "comedy element," as the newspaper report described it, "involving an English exquisite and a

horsey husband," thrown in, the Squire and Grey eliminated, and Langham "endowed with such nobility of character as ultimately to marry Rose." She at once cabled her protest with some energy and succeeded in getting the further performance of the play stopped ; but hardly was this episode ended than another followed on its heels.

"A writer in the New York *Tribune*," wrote the *Glasgow Herald* in April, 1889, "exposes a most barefaced trick of trading upon Mrs. Humphry Ward's name. A continuation, he says, of *Robert Elsmere* has already been begun by an American publisher, and advance sheets, containing thrilling instalments of the romantic adventures of *Robert Elsmere's Daughter*, are being scattered broadcast over the length and breadth of the United States. The industrious agents of the publisher of this sheet have been busily engaged in inserting sample chapters of this new novel under the doors of houses all over New York. This, however, is not the worst feature of the trick. From the title of the story the impression sought to be conveyed is that Mrs. Humphry Ward, the authoress of *Robert Elsmere*, is responsible, too, for *Robert Elsmere's Daughter*, the headings of the story being arranged in this specious shape : '*Robert Elsmere's Daughter*—a companion story to *Robert Elsmere*—by Mrs. Humphry Ward.'"

It was no wonder that the scandal of these events was used by the promoters of the International Copyright Bill then before Congress as one of their most powerful arguments ; for there were many honourable publishing firms in America which abhorred these proceedings and were only anxious to regularize their relations with British authors. Mr. George Haven Putnam, head of the firm of G. P. Putnam's Sons, and the International Copyright Committee which he formed, had already been working in this direction for some years ; but the opposition was strenuous, and it was only in March, 1891, that the Copyright Bill which was to have so great an effect on Mrs. Ward's fortunes actually became law in the United States. Even before that, however, very flattering offers were made to her by American publishers—especially by Mr. S. S. McClure, founder of the then youthful *McClure's Magazine*—for the

right of publishing the "authorized version" of her next book. Mr. McClure tried to beguile her into writing him a "novelette," or a "romance of Bible times," but Mrs. Ward was not to be moved. She had already begun work upon her next book (*David Grieve*), and all she said in writing to her sister (Mrs. Huxley) was: "This American, Mr. McClure, is a wonderful man. He has offered me £1,000 for the serial rights of a story as long as *Milly and Olly*! Naturally I am not going to do it, but it is amusing," To her father she wrote in more serious mood about the American boom:

> "It is a great moral strain, this extraordinary success. I feel often as though it were a struggle to preserve one's full individuality, and one's sense of truth and proportion in the teeth of it. There is no help but to look away from oneself and everything that pertains to self, to the Eternal and Divine things, to live penetrated with the feebleness and poverty of self and the greatness of God."

Yet naturally she enjoyed the many letters from Americans of all ranks and classes which reached her during the autumn and winter of 1888. The veteran Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote to her in his most charming vein, speaking of the book as a "medicated novel, which will do much to improve the secretions and clear the obstructed channels of the decrepit theological system." W. R. Thayer, afterwards the biographer of Cavour, wrote:

> "The extraordinary popularity of *Robert Elsmere* is a most significant symptom of the spiritual conditions of this country. No book since *Uncle Tom's Cabin* has had so sudden and wide a diffusion among all classes of readers; and I believe that no other book of equal seriousness ever had so quick a hearing. I have seen it in the hands of nursery-maids, and of shop-girls behind the counter; of frivolous young women, who read every novel that is talked about; of business men, professors, students, and even schoolboys. The newspapers and periodicals are still discussing it, and, perhaps the best sign of all, it has been preached against by the foremost clergymen of all denominations."

And a sturdy rationalist, Mr. W. D. Childs, thus recorded his protest:

> "I regret the popularity of *Robert Elsmere* in this

country. Our western people are like sheep in such matters. They will not see that the book was written for a people with a State Church on its hands, that a gross exaggeration of the importance of religion was necessary. It will revive interest in theology and retard the progress of rationalism.

"Am I not right in this? You surely cannot think it good for individuals or for societies to take religion seriously, when there is so much economic disorder in the world, when the mass of physical and mental suffering is so obviously reducible only by material means."

It was very delightful, of course, to be making a little money from the book, after so many years of strenuous work, and though the sum she had earned was still a modest one (about £3,200 by January, 1889), it enabled her and her husband to make plans for the future and to embark on the purchase of some land for building in the still unspoilt country to the east of Haslemere. Here, on Grayswood Hill, overlooking the vast tangle of the Weald as far as Chanctonbury Ring and the South Downs, a red-brick house of moderate size, cunningly designed by Mr. Robson, gradually arose during 1889 and the first part of 1890; but while it was still building a fortunate accident placed in our way the chance of living for three months in a far different habitation—John Hampden's wonderful old house near Great Missenden, which was then in a state of interregnum, and might be rented for a small sum.

"It will be quite an adventure," wrote Mrs. Ward to her publisher in July, 1889, "for in spite of the beauty and romance of the place there is hardly enough furniture of a ramshackle kind in it to enable us to camp for three months in tolerable comfort! But by dint of sending down a truck load of baths, carpets and saucepans from home we shall get on, and our expenses will be less than if we took a villa at Westgate."

And to Mrs. Johnson, of Oxford, who was coming with her whole family to stay there, Mrs. Ward wrote three days after her arrival:

"The furniture of the house is decrepit, scanty and decayed, but it has breeding and refinement, and is a thousand times preferable to any luxurious modern stuff.

I am *perfectly* happy here, and bless the lucky chance which drew our attention to the advertisement. I will not spoil the old house and gardens and park for you by describing them—but they are a dream, and the out-at-elbowness of everything is an additional charm."

So for three months we stayed at Hampden, revelling in its beauty and its spaciousness, learning to know the Chiltern country with its chalk-downs and beech-woods, entertaining many visitors, including the much-loved Professor Huxley, and watching anxiously for the ghost that walked in the passage outside the tapestry-room on moonlight nights. It never walked for us, though Mrs. Ward sat up many times to woo it, but there were plenty of ghosts of another sort in a house that had sheltered Queen Elizabeth on one of her "progresses," that still possessed the chair in which John Hampden had sat when they came to arrest him for ship-money, and that had guarded his body at the last, when his Greencoats bore it thither from Thame to lie in the great hall for one more night before its burial in the little church across the garden. At first there were no lamps, and we groped about with stumps of candles after dark, but gradually all the more glaring deficiencies were remedied and Mrs. Ward settled down to a happy three months of work on her new novel, *David Grieve*. But as she wrote of her two wild children on the Derbyshire moors, or of young David and his books in Manchester, the very different scene around her formed itself in her mind into a new setting, from which arose in course of time *Marcella*.

Meanwhile it was not Hampden's ghost but Elsmere's that still haunted her, in the sense that the "New Brotherhood" with which the novel ended would not die with it, but struggled dumbly in the author's mind for expression in some living form. Some time before she had been deeply impressed by a visit she had paid to Toynbee Hall with "Max Creighton," as she wrote to her father, when she found that "in the library there *R.E.* had been read to pieces, and in a workmen's club which had just been started several ideas had been taken from the "New Brotherhood." The experience had remained with her; she had brooded and dreamt over it, and now when she returned to London in the autumn of 1889 she began for the first time to try to work out the idea in consultation with certain chosen friends.

"Lord Carlisle came and had a long talk with M. about a proposed Unitarian Toynbee somewhere in South London"—so wrote the little sister-in-law (herself an orthodox Christian) in her journal on November 11, 1889. And a little later: "Mr. Stopford Brooke came and had a long talk with her about a 'New Brotherhood' they hope to start with Lord Carlisle and a few others to help."

Was it to be a new religion, or a re-vivifying of the old? The impulse to build up, to re-create, was hot within her; could she not appeal to her generation to help her in following out this impulse towards some practical goal? Was there not room for another Toynbee, inspired still more definitely than the first with the ideals of a simpler Christianity? The dæmon drove; surely the very success of her book showed that this was the need of the new age in which she lived. She plunged into the task, and only time and Fate were to reveal that the "new religion" was doomed to take no outward form, but to work itself out in ways undreamt of as yet by the author of *Robert Elsmere*.

CHAPTER V

UNIVERSITY HALL—*DAVID GRIEVE* AND "STOCKS"

1889–1892

THE conversations with Stopford Brooke and Lord Carlisle mentioned in the last chapter contained the germ of all that public work which was to claim henceforth so large a share of Mrs. Ward's life. Up to this point she had hardly taken any part in London committees; indeed, those spacious days were still comparatively free from them, and it is remembered that when the first meeting of the group with whom she was discussing her new scheme took place at Russell Square,[1] one irreverent child in the schoolroom next door said to its fellow, "What's a committee?" "Oh," said the elder, in the manner of one who imparts information, "it's when the grown-ups get together, and first they think, and then they talk, and then they think again." At the moment no sound was audible through the wall. "They must be thinking now," said the instructor carelessly, leaving his junior to the solemn belief, held for many years, that a committee was a sort of prayer-meeting.

That first group, who discussed and finally approved Mrs. Ward's draft circular announcing the foundation of a "Hall for Residents" in London, consisted of the following men and women besides herself: Dr. Martineau, Dr. James Drummond, of Manchester College, Oxford, Mr. Stopford Brooke, Lord Carlisle, Rev. W. Copeland Bowie, Dr. Estlin Carpenter, Mr. Frederick Nettlefold, the Dowager Countess Russell, Miss Frances Power Cobbe, and lastly, Dr. Blake Odgers, Q.C., who acted as Hon. Treasurer.

[1] On February 3, 1890.

Mr. Copeland Bowie, who helped Mrs. Ward for several months as a "kind of assistant secretary," has recorded his impressions of those crowded days in an article which he wrote for the *Inquirer* on April 3, 1920:

"We met in the dining-room at Russell Square. Mrs. Ward was the moving and executive force; the rest of us were simply admiring and sympathetic spectators of her enterprise and zeal. It is delightful to recall her abounding activity and enthusiasm. Difficulties were overcome, criticisms were answered, work was carried on with extraordinary devotion and skill. Several meetings were devoted to the consideration of how to proceed, for the pathway was beset by many difficulties. At last, early in March, 1890, a scheme for the establishment of a Settlement at University Hall, Gordon Square, in a part of the old building belonging to Dr. Williams's Trustees, was agreed upon. The religious note is very prominent. University Hall would encourage "an improved popular teaching of the Bible and the history of religion, in order to show the adaptability of the faith of the past to the needs of the present."

The aims of the new movement were, in fact, set forth in the original circular in these words:

"It has been determined to establish a Hall for residents in London, somewhat on the lines of Toynbee Hall, with the following objects in view:

"1. To provide a fresh rallying point and enlarged means of common religious action for all those to whom Christianity, whether by inheritance or process of thought, has become a system of practical conduct, based on faith in God, and on the inspiring memory of a great teacher, rather than a system of dogma based on a unique revelation. Such persons especially, who, while holding this point of view, have not yet been gathered into any existing religious organization, are often greatly in want of those helps towards the religious life, whether in thought or action, which are so readily afforded by the orthodox bodies to their own members. The first aim of the new Hall will be a religious aim.

"2. The Hall will endeavour to promote an improved popular teaching of the Bible and of the history of religion.



Bassano, photo.

MRS. WARD IN 1889

To this end continuous teaching will be attempted under its roof on such subjects as Old and New Testament criticism, the history of Christianity, and that of non-Christian religions. A special effort will be made to establish Sunday teaching both at the Hall and, by the help of the Hall residents, in other parts of London, for children of all classes. The children of well-to-do parents are often worse off in this matter of careful religious teaching than those of their poorer neighbours. There can be little doubt that many persons are deeply dissatisfied with the whole state of popular religious teaching in England. Either it is purely dogmatic, taking no account of the developments of modern thought and criticism, or it is colourless and perfunctory, the result of a compromise which satisfies and inspires nobody. Yet that a simpler Christianity can be frankly and effectively taught, so as both to touch the heart and direct the will, is the conviction and familiar experience of many persons in England, America, France and Holland. But the new teaching wants organizing, deepening and extending. It should be the aim of the proposed Hall to work towards such an end."

It was natural that such ideals as these should appeal in a peculiar way to the Unitarian community, and we find in fact that the first subscription list, which guaranteed an income of about £700 to University Hall for three years, contains a preponderance of Unitarian names. Lord Carlisle and Mr. Stopford Brooke were in favour of calling it frankly a Unitarian Settlement. " There is a life and spirit about the things which are done by Dissenters," wrote Lord Carlisle, " which I believe can never be got out of people who have a lingering feeling for the Church of England." But the majority on the Committee, including Mrs. Ward and Dr. Martineau, thought that this would be setting unnecessary limits to the movement, which they rather intended to be a leaven permeating the lump both of orthodoxy and of indifferentism. It was therefore agreed not to use the word in the preliminary circular, though all the world could see from the names on the Committee that the tone of the new Settlement would be largely that of the younger and freer Unitarianism which had founded Manchester College, Oxford. It was one of Mrs. Ward's

most characteristic achievements that while she herself never sympathized with Unitarianism as an organization, she was yet able to work closely with Unitarians in this her first great enterprise, sharing with them their enthusiasm for the Christian message and their austere devotion to truth, while herself cherishing that "lingering feeling for the Church of England" which forbade her to identify herself with any outside body while there was still hope of influencing and widening the national Church. Yet for all practical purposes the breach between the "new religion," as its critics contemptuously dubbed it, and the Establishment was complete enough, and the foundation of University Hall only confirmed the orthodox in their disapproval of Mrs. Ward and all her works.

Besides its definitely religious aim, the new Settlement was to have a well-marked social side as well. This is set forth in another paragraph of the circular:

"It is intended that the Hall shall do its utmost to secure for its residents opportunities for religious and social work, and for the study of social problems, such as are possessed by the residents at Toynbee Hall or those at Oxford House. There will be a certain number of rooms in the Hall which can be used for social purposes, for lectures, for recreative and continuation classes and so on. Though the Hall itself is in one of the West Central Squares, it is surrounded on three sides by districts crowded with poor. A room could be taken for workers from the Hall in any of these districts or in the Drury Lane neighbourhood. In addition, the Hall is close to Gower Street Station, so that it would be comparatively easy for the residents to take part in any of the organizations already existing in the East or South of London, for the help of the poor and the study of social problems."

And in spite of the religious ardour of its founders, it was in this aspect of the work of University Hall that the germ of future developments really lay. But the future lay hidden as yet from Mrs. Ward and her gifted band of associates and fellow-workers.

Many difficulties were encountered in the appointment of a suitable Warden, for a combination of qualities was

required which was not easy to find, especially in the limited circle of those whose views in matters of faith agreed broadly with those of the Committee. Month after month went by while Mrs. Ward and Dr. Martineau interviewed many candidates, often assisted by Canon Barnett, of Toynbee, whose interest in the new venture was as sincere as it was generous. Applications from possible residents came in fast, showing that the work would not lack support in that direction, but even in August the Warden was still to seek. At length, however, in September, the ideal choice was made in Mr. Philip Wicksteed, who was then holding the office of minister at the Unitarian chapel in Little Portland Street. He was already beginning to be widely known outside his regular work as a lecturer on Biblical subjects and on Dante, and Mrs. Ward had already sounded him once or twice in this matter of the Wardenship. But he had hitherto evaded it on the ground that his election would identify the Hall with Unitarianism. At last, however, Mrs. Ward won his acceptance at an interview she had with him at Russell Square, in which she greeted him with the words "I want to *wrestle* with you!" He dealt frankly with her on the subject of the religious aims of the Hall, and in a letter written to her a few days after his acceptance said:

> "You remember when first you spoke to me on this matter how I told you that I had never been clear as to the exact thing contemplated in the Hall, and had never felt that it had any programme. Under those circumstances I felt that it would be false to myself and in reality false to you to allow myself to be overcome by your splendid faith and enthusiasm and take it up without any true inspiration in pity that so noble a 'quest' should find no knight-errant to try it.
>
> "My work with you has considerably cleared my vision, and has inspired me with growing *hopes* for the institution, but I cannot honestly say that it has given me any deep *faith* in its success. You know how anxious I have been throughout about our audience for lectures, and how doubtful about the existence of any large public seriously interested in Biblical studies. My fears are not allayed; though I hope the result may put them to shame."

With Mr. Wicksteed's acceptance of the Wardenship, the arrangements for lectures and the preparations for the

reception of Residents were pushed on apace, while the Committee decided that a formal opening ceremony must be held in order to plant the flag of the new Settlement's faith and ideals. The Portman Rooms were taken for the purpose; the venerable Dr. Martineau consented to be in the chair, and Mrs. Ward was to make the principal speech. She had never spoken in public before, and was genuinely terrified at the prospect (three years later she put into *Marcella's* experience in the East End her own horror of extempore speaking); but she prepared her address with great care, and was afterwards told that her voice carried to the farthest limits of the room, packed as it was with a keenly expectant audience. Her plea was that the time had come for a reconstruction of the basis of Christian belief; that the results both of Darwinian inquiry and of historical criticism must be faced, especially in the teaching of children, but that when the "search for an exacter truth, which is the fate and mission of humanity" had been met, a possibility of faith remained which would be the future hope of the world. To the elucidation of this faith the efforts of the Hall, on its teaching and lecturing side, would be devoted. And in speaking of the "social and practical effort which is an *essential* part of our scheme," she pleaded that it was "yet not its most distinctive nor its most vital part. The need of urging it on public attention is recognized in all camps. Yet, meanwhile, there are hundreds of men and women who spend themselves in these works of charity and mercy who are all the time inwardly starved, crying for something else, something more, if they could but get it. What matters to them, first and foremost—what would give fresh life to all their efforts—would be the provision of a new motive power, a new hope for the individual life in God, a new respect for man's destiny. Let me recall you for a moment from the gospel of works to the great Pauline gospel of faith, and the inner life! It is in the bringing back of *faith*—not the faith which confuses legend with history, or puts authority in the place of knowledge, but the faith which springs from moral and spiritual fact, and may be day after day, and hour after hour, again verified by fact—that the great task of our generation lies."

Thus was the new venture launched, amid a mingled chorus of admiration and criticism from that section of

the world which was affected by the movement of ideas. The lecturing at University Hall was soon in full swing, and was maintained at a very high level during the years 1891 and 1892, so that when Mrs. Ward went on a speaking tour to some of the northern towns in the autumn of the latter year in order to appeal for funds for a further period of three years (an appeal in which she was completely successful), she was able to give a very remarkable account of it. Many courses on both Old and New Testament criticism had been given, by Mr. Wicksteed, by Dr. Estlin Carpenter, by M. Chavannes, of Leyden; on the Fourth Gospel by that fine scholar, Mr. Charles Hargrove; on Theism by Prof. Knight, and on the Gospel of St. Luke by Dr. Martineau himself. These latter took place on Sunday afternoons during the spring of 1891. "Sunday after Sunday," said Mrs. Ward, "the Hall of Dr. Williams's Library was crowded to the doors, and, I believe by many to whom the line of thought followed in the lectures was of quite fresh help and service; and it will be long indeed before many of us forget the last Sunday—the venerable form, the beautiful voice, the note of unconquerable hope as to the future of faith, and yet of unconquerable courage as to the rights of the mind! I at least shall always look back to that hour as to a moment of consecration for our young Institution, disclosing to us at once its opportunities and its responsibilities." In the non-Biblical sphere Mrs. J. R. Green had given a series of lectures on the development of the English towns [1]; Miss Beatrice Potter (soon to become Mrs. Sidney Webb) a course on the Co-operative Movement, which became the foundation of her great book on that subject; Mr. Graham Wallas on "The English Citizen"; Mr. Stopford Brooke on "The English Poets of the Nineteenth Century"; while the Warden lectured to large audiences on Dante, and "ground away" (in his own words) at political economy, thinking aloud before his band of students and "forging forward on new lines." It was all very stimulating, very much alive; but whether, as the months passed on, it was exactly carrying out the aims and intentions of that opening day, some sympathetic observers began to doubt.

[1] Afterwards embodied in her book, *Town Life in the Fifteenth Century*.

"I was uneasy all the time," wrote Mr. Wicksteed afterwards to J. P. T., "because though I thought I was working honestly and in a way usefully, yet I could never quite feel that the Settlement was doing the work it set out to do, or that it was quite justifying its subscription list. But I don't believe your mother, in spite of a great measure of personal disappointment, ever had the smallest doubt or misgiving in this matter. She thoroughly believed in the significance and value of what *was* being done, and cared for it with a vivid faith and affection, and supported it with an inventive enthusiasm, that have always seemed to me the expression of a generosity and magnanimity of a type and quality that were quite distinctive."

An energetic attempt was made to interest the young men employed in the big shops of Tottenham Court Road in the Hall's activities; but the times were premature; not until the Great War had loosed the foundations of our society did the young men of Tottenham Court Road find their way into the Y.M.C.A. "The young men of Tottenham Court Road," wrote Mr. Copeland Bowie, "gave no sign that they wished to partake of the food provided for them at University Hall." Then, somewhat apart from the lecturing scheme of the Hall, there grew up the body of Residents, young men of divers attainments and tastes who were hard to mould into the original scheme, some of whom were even greatly concerned to show that they depended in no way for their ideas on the author of *Robert Elsmere*. Occasionally there were difficult moments at the Council meetings, when the Residents' views clashed with those of the older members, but it was at those moments, and generally in her gift for bowing to the inevitable when it came, that Mrs. Ward endeared herself most to her fellow-workers by her rare great-heartedness. During their first winter's work at the Hall the Residents had discovered, in the squalid neighbourhood to the east of Tavistock Square, a dingy building that went by the name of Marchmont Hall, which they decided to take as the scene of their regular social activities. They raised a special fund for its expenses, and under the leadership of a young solicitor, who combined much shrewdness and ability with a glowing enthusiasm for the service of his fellow-men, the late Mr. Alfred Robinson, the suspicions of the neighbourhood were

overcome and a fruitful programme of boys' clubs, men's clubs, concerts and lectures launched by the autumn of 1891. Mrs. Ward was deeply interested in the experiment, and hoped against hope that it might lead to those opportunities for Christian teaching which still lay very near her heart. A year later she was able to give the following account of their first attempts in that direction:

"The Sunday evening lectures are preceded by half an hour's music, and have been from the first more definitely ethical and religious in tone than those given on Thursday. But it is only quite recently we have felt that we could speak freely, without danger of misunderstanding, upon those subjects which are generally identified by the working-classes with sectarian and ecclesiastical propaganda. Now that we are known we need have no fear; and on November 12 the Warden, who had already spoken on the prophets of Israel and other kindred topics, gave an address on the life and character of Jesus. It was received with warm feeling, and more lectures of the same kind have already been arranged for. Next term we hope a class in the Gospels, already begun, may take larger proportions. Among the boys and young men of the Hall, often intelligent and well-educated as they are, there is an extraordinary amount of sheer ignorance and indifference as to the Christian story and literature, even when they have had their full share of the usual Sunday School training. To some of us there could be no more welcome task, to be undertaken at once with eagerness and with trembling, than that of making old things new to eyes and hearts still capable of that 'admiration, hope, and love' by which alone we truly live."

But the movement never developed, for in truth there was no Elsmere to lead it; Mrs. Ward herself went three times to take a boy's class on Sunday afternoons, but could not, in the midst of her other work, maintain the effort; the Warden, versatile as he was, did not regard it as his *first* interest, while from the body of Residents came a dumb sense of antagonism, not amounting to direct opposition, but just as effective, which in the end prevailed. The "School" of Biblical studies at University Hall continued as before, appealing to a definite class of students and

educated persons of the middle-class, but the attempt to fuse it with the social work at Marchmont Hall was doomed to succeed as little as the attempt to attract to it the half-educated shopmen of Tottenham Court Road. Gradually the human interest of the experiment, the sense of romance and adventure, went over from the lecturing side to the work at Marchmont Hall, where the popular lectures and discussions, the Saturday evening concerts and the Saturday morning "play-rooms" for children were making a real mark on the life of the district. But Mrs. Ward was fully able to recognize this, and accepted in an ungrudging spirit the different direction which circumstances had given to her own cherished dreams.

"It will be seen readily enough," wrote Mr. Wicksteed in the memorial pamphlet issued by the Passmore Edwards Settlement, "that it was on the side of the School rather than on that of the Residence that Mrs. Ward's ideals seemed to have the best chance of fulfilling themselves. Yet in truth it was in the Residence that the germ of future development lay. The greatness of Mrs. Ward's character was shown in her recognition—painful and unwilling sometimes, but always brave and loyal—of this fact. She could not and did not relinquish her "Elsmerean" ideals. The romance of *Richard Meynell*, published twenty-three years after *Robert Elsmere*, shows them in unabated ardour. The failure of the Residence to amalgamate with the School was the source of deep distress to her. She sometimes suggested measures for overcoming it that did not approve themselves to her colleagues, but throughout she never suspected their loyalty, and never failed in her own. It needed rare magnanimity. Patience seems too passive a word to apply to so ardent a spirit, but something that did the work of patience was very truly there. And as she came to recognize that with the available material the Settlement could not be the embodiment of her full ideal, she withdrew her vital energies from the attempt to force a passage where none was possible, she steadily refused to let blood flow through a wound that could be and should be healed, and she threw all the strength of her inventive and resourceful mind —and what is more the full stream of her affection and joy in accomplished good—into the development of such branches of her purpose as by that agency could be furthered."

By the year 1893 the situation as between University Hall and Marchmont Hall had become a curious one, since the former was too large and expensive for its purpose and the latter not nearly large enough. Mrs. Ward and her friends came to the conclusion that some scheme must be devised for combining the activities of both institutions under one roof; but since no suitable building existed anywhere in the neighbourhood of Marchmont Hall, where deep roots had been struck in the affections of the working population, it became obvious that the only solution was to build. Through the early spring of 1894 Mrs. Ward laboured to interest the old friends of University Hall in an appeal for a Building Fund of £5,000; but it was uphill work; her health had suffered greatly from the long strain, and there were moments when hope sank very low. Then, one evening in May of that year, the postman's knock sounded below, and one of us went down as usual to fetch the letters. There was but a single dull-looking letter in an ordinary "commercial envelope." "Only a bill," announced the bearer, as it was placed in Mrs. Ward's hands. She opened it, glanced at the signature, read it rapidly through, and then, with a little cry, exclaimed: "Mr. Passmore Edwards is going to build us a Settlement!"

She had written to him at last, knowing of him—as all that generation knew—mainly as the generous founder of Free Libraries, but without much hope that he would seriously take up the Marchmont Hall building scheme. At that time the Committee were in favour of a site in Somers Town, north of the Euston Road, the advantages of which Mrs. Ward had set forth in her letter to Mr. Edwards. His answer ran as follows:

May 30, 1894.

My dear Madam,—

Since I received your letter in Italy I have considered your suggestion in reference to the extension in ampler premises of University Hall Settlement, and thereby planting as you say a Toynbee Hall in the Somers Town district. I have also visited the district in and around Clarendon Sq., and am convinced that such an Institution is as much wanted in North London as it was wanted in

East London. I therefore cheerfully respond to your appeal, and undertake to provide the necessary building within the limits of the sum you indicate, if somebody will provide a suitable site. The vacant place in Clarendon Sq. would, I consider, be a convenient spot for the Settlement. As a matter of course, provision must be made that the building shall be permanently devoted to the purpose now intended. In my opinion we have the two things most necessary in the Somers Town district for a Toynbee Hall: we have a numerous working population requiring educational assistance and advantages; and we have in the neighbourhood many able and willing workers ready to assist in works of intellectual, moral and social culture.

I remain,
Yours faithfully,
J. Passmore Edwards.

This was her first great victory on the road to the building of the Passmore Edwards Settlement. That road was still to be a long and difficult one, but she was not to be discouraged, and where many lesser souls would have fallen out by the wayside, wearied by ill-health and by the multiplication of obstacles, she persisted, and won in the end a vantage-ground in the fine buildings of the Settlement, whence, in the course of time, she could pass on to new and various achievements.

Heavy and exacting as the work of University Hall was during the first three years of its existence, and glum as the face of our coachman was wont to look at the reiterated orders to drive there (for he disapproved of his horse being kept waiting in the street while people were just talking), Mrs. Ward never allowed it to absorb her mind completely. Indeed, these years saw the writing of her second three-volume novel, *The History of David Grieve*, as well as many important developments in our domestic affairs. The house on Grayswood Hill, near Haslemere, was rising fast during the early months of 1890, while the principles of the new Settlement were being thrashed out in the study at Russell Square, and at length Mrs. Ward tore herself away from London, stipulating for a six weeks' break from the affairs of University Hall, buried herself in a neighbouring house

named " Grayswood Beeches," wrote *David* hard, and kept a watchful eye on the plasterers and painters at work on " Lower Grayswood " below. She took the keenest interest in every detail of the new house, planning it out in daily letters to her husband, and yet as it drew near completion she could not help rebelling at its very newness, at the half-made garden and the plantations of birch and larch and pine which covered much of the nine acres of ground, while of real trees there was hardly one. Waves of longing would assail her for Hampden House, with its silence and its spaciousness, its old lawns and trees, and its complete absence of neighbours. " How I have been hankering after Hampden lately ! " she writes to her father in June, 1890, and to her husband she confesses that she has been to the agent's to inquire whether Hampden could be let for a term of years. " They don't think so. I told them to inquire without mentioning our names at all." Hampden, however, was not to be had, and when once she was established in Lower Grayswood, Mrs. Ward took more kindly to the house, which had from its windows one of the most astonishing views in all the South of England. Yet still she wrote to her father: " I doubt whether I shall be content ultimately without an old house and old trees ! If one may covet anything, I think one may covet this kind of inheritance from the past to shelter one's own later life in. Life seems so short to make anything quite fresh. Meanwhile, Lower Grayswood is very nice, and more than we deserve ! "

The verdict of children and friends was indeed unanimous in praise of the poor new house, whence endless fishing expeditions were made to muddy little brooks in the plain below, almost compensating for the loss of Forkèd Pond and the other barbarian delights of Borough Farm. But even the children realized that there were " too many people about " for the health of their mother's work. The pile of cards on the hall table grew ominously thick. Americans walked in, taking no denial, and once in mid-August, when the youngest child tactlessly won a junior race at the Lythe Hill Sports, with all Haslemere looking on, there were paragraphs in the evening papers. It would not do, and I think the house at Haslemere was doomed from that day onwards. Still, for two years it played its part delightfully

in the web of Mrs. Ward's life, giving her quiet, especially in the autumn and winter, for the writing of *David Grieve*, giving her deep draughts of beauty which were not forgotten in after years. The lodge was made a home for tired Londoners, whether boys or mothers or factory-girls, and the house itself was never long empty of guests.

There, too, in the book-lined room which she had made her study, she would on Sunday evenings carry out in practice those ideas on the teaching of the Bible which she had striven to inculcate at University Hall. The audience sat on low stools or lay on the floor, while she read to them usually a part of the Gospels, making the scene live again, as only she could make it, not only by her intimate knowledge of the times, but by her gift of presentation. Systematically, making us use our minds to follow her, she would work through a section of St. Mark or St. Matthew, comparing each with the other, showing the touches of the "later hand," taking us deep into the fascinating intricacies of the Synoptic Problem. But all the time the central figure would grow clearer and clearer, in simple majesty of parable or act of healing, while at the greatest moments commentary fell away and only the old words broke the stillness. She was immensely interested in the problem of the Master's own view of himself and his mission, following him step by step to the declaration at Cæsarea Philippi, then tracing the gathering conviction that in himself was to be fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy of the Suffering Servant. She was inclined to reject the prophecies of the Second Coming as showing too obviously the feeling of the second generation, as being unworthy of him who said, "The Kingdom of God is within you." But in later years she came to regard them as probably based on utterances of his own, for was he not, after all, the child of his time and country? With an episode like the Transfiguration she would show us the elements of popular legend from which it was put together, fitting piece into piece till the whole stood out with a new freshness, throwing its light backwards over the age-long Jewish expectations of the return of Moses and Elijah. So with the Resurrection stories; she bade us always remember the teeming soil from which they sprang, in that long-past childhood of the world; how none of them were written down till forty years, most of them not till sixty

and seventy years, had passed since the Crucifixion; how the return from Hades on the third day is at least as old as Alcestis. These things, she said, forbade us to accept them as literal fact; but it was impossible to listen to her reading of the Walk to Emmaus, or the finding of the empty tomb, without coming under the spell of an emotion as deep as it was austere. For the fact that we in these latter days had outgrown our childhood and must distinguish truth from phantasy was no reason in her mind, why we should renounce the poetic value of scenes and pictures woven into the very fabric of our being. And so, Sunday after Sunday, our little minds drank in a teaching which she would fain believe could have been spread broadcast among our generation, could the ideals of University Hall but reach the masses. She did not realize how unique her teaching was, nor how few among her generation combined such knowledge as hers with such a power of instilling it into other minds and hearts.

The writing of *David Grieve* was a long-sustained effort, extending over the best part of three years, and too often performed under the handicap of writer's cramp and sleeplessness. But Mrs. Ward was at the prime of her powers, and felt herself more thoroughly master of her material in this book than she had done in the case of *Robert Elsmere*, so that the revision, when it came, was a matter of weeks and not of months. Her visits to Manchester and Derbyshire for the local colour of the book had inspired her with a vivid faith in the working population of the north, which finds expression in a letter written to her father in September, 1890, in reply to criticisms which he, with his Catholic prepossessions, had made on the unloveliness of their lives:

> "You and I would not agree about New Mills, I am afraid! At least, if New Mills is like Bacup and the towns along the Irwell, as I suppose it is. After seeing those mill-colonies among the moors, I came home cheered and comforted in my mind for the future of England—so differently may the same things affect different people. Beatrice Potter told me that she had stayed for some time incog. as one of themselves with a family of mill-hands at Bacup, and that to her mind they were 'the salt of the earth,' so good and kind to each other, so diligent,

so God-fearing, so truly unworldly. She attributed it to their religion, to those hideous chapels, which develop in them the keenest individual sense of responsibility to God and man, to their habit of combination for a common end as in their Co-op. Societies and Unions, and to their real sensitiveness to education and the things of the mind, up to a certain point, of course. And certainly all that I saw last autumn bore her out. I imagine that if you were to compare Lancashire with any other manufacturing district in Europe, with Belgium, with Lyons, with Catalonia, it would show favourably as regards the type of human character developed. All the better men and women are interested in the things that interested St. Paul—grace and salvation, and the struggle of the spirit against the flesh, and for the rest they work for their wives and children, and learn gradually to respect those laws of health which are, after all, as much 'set in the world,' to use Uncle Matt's phrase, as beauty and charm, and in their own way as much a will and purpose of God. Read the books about Lancashire life a hundred years ago, and see if they have not improved—if they are not less brutal, less earthy, nearer altogether to the intelligent type of life. That they have far to go yet one cannot deny. But altogether, when London fills me with despair, I often think of Lancashire and am comforted for the future. I think of the people I had tea with at Bacup, all mill-hands, but so refined, gentle and good; and I think of the wonderful development of the civic sense in a town like Oldham, with all its public institutions, its combinations of workpeople for every possible object, and its generally happy and healthy tone. I wish the streets were less ugly, but after all, our climate is hard and drives people indoors three-parts of the year, and the race has very little artistic gift."

Meanwhile, the Copyright Committee was again hard at work in the United States, arousing much anxious speculation in Mrs. Ward's mind as to whether their Bill would be through Congress in time for her new book; but in the end the victory came more easily and swiftly than was expected. Congress passed it in November, 1890, and it became law in the following March. The effect on Mrs. Ward's fortunes was not long in making itself felt. Mr. George Smith had

been negotiating for her with an American firm that offered good but not magnificent terms for *David Grieve*; he was dissatisfied, and in his wise heart bethought him of her old friends the Macmillans, who had an "American house." The sequel must be told in his own words:

15, Waterloo Place, S.W.
June 13, 1891.

Dear Mrs. Humphry Ward,—

I met Frederick Macmillan in the Park this morning. It flashed on my mind that I would sell him the American copyright of your book, and after a long talk (which made me late for breakfast) I promised him that if he made me a firm offer of seven thousand pounds for the American copyright, including Canada, before one o'clock to-day, I would accept it on your behalf. He has just called here and written the enclosed note. I am rather pleased with myself, and I hope that you will not reproach me. I write in haste, for I shall feel rather anxious until I have a line from you on the subject.

Believe me,
Yours sincerely,
G. M. Smith.

Needless to say, the "line" was forthcoming, and Mrs. Ward was left to contemplate, with some emotion, the fact that she was mistress of a little fortune. Whether the Macmillans remained as contented with their bargain as she was is, however, a point of some obscurity. Certainly they desired her next book (*Marcella*), which amply made up to them for any shortcomings on *David Grieve*, but during the negotiations for it some uncomfortable tales leaked out. "Mr. Brett told me," wrote Mrs. Ward to George Smith, eighteen months after the appearance of *David*, "that owing to the description of profit-sharing in *David Grieve* and the interest roused by it in America, their American branch adopted it last year for all their employés. Then in consequence of *David* there were no profits to divide! I don't know whether to laugh or cry over the situation, and I am quite determined that if there are losses this time I will share them."

But as yet the prospect was unclouded, and the summer of

1891 was spent in a hard wrestle with the remaining chapters of the book—with the tragedy of Lucy and the sombre fate of Louie Grieve—but at length, on September 24, the last words of *David Grieve* were written, and on October 16 she and Mr. Ward fled for nine weeks to Italy.

It was not their first visit, for in the spring of 1889 they had spent eight days in Rome, making their first Italian friendships and learning something of the spell of that city of old magic. "In eight days one can but scratch the surface of Rome," she had written to her father on that occasion. "Still, I think Lord Acton was quite right when he said to us at Cannes, 'If you have only three days, go!' To have walked into St. Peter's, to have driven up on to the Janiculan and seen the view of Rome, the Alban Hills, the Campagna and Soracte which you get from there, to have wandered about the Forum and Colosseum and to have climbed the Palatine and the Capitol, is something after all, even if one never saw this marvellous place again."

Now this second time she was so tired that they passed Rome by on the outward journey and went instead to Naples, Amalfi and Ravello, where the good Signora Palumbo, landlady of the famous little inn, tended her as she lay quite fallow, browsing in books or gazing at sea and sky and sunny coast. But a visit to Pompeii could still arouse all her historical instincts:

> "To sit in the Forum there," she writes to her sister, Mrs. Leonard Huxley, "or in one of the bright gaily painted houses, or restaurants with the wine-jars still perfect in the marble counters, and to think that people were chatting and laughing in those very courts and under those very pictures while Jesus was before Pilate, or Paul was landing at Puteoli, on the same coast some twenty miles north, made an electric moment in life. It is so seldom one actually *feels* and *touches* the past. After seeing those temples with their sacrificial altars and *cellæ*, their priests' sleeping-rooms and dining-rooms, I read this morning St. Paul's directions to the Corinthians about meat offered to idols—in fact, the whole first letter—with quite different eyes."

To the same beloved sister she was indebted for the inimitable tales of her small boy, Julian, which enliven the

later pages of *David Grieve*; for Sandy Grieve was taken direct from this little grandson of the Professor—an "impet" indeed, in his mother's expressive phrase. "Your stories of Julian have been killing," wrote Mrs. Ward from Naples; "I was sorry one of them arrived too late for *David*. By the way, I have not yet written to Willie to say that Sandy is merely an imperfect copy of Julian. He writes 'We both *love* Sandy.' And I am sure when the book comes out that Sandy will be the making of some of the last part."

A month after Mrs. Ward's return to England, that is on January 22, 1892, *David Grieve* appeared, and was at once greeted with a chorus of praise, criticism and general talk. "Were there ever such contradictory judgments!" wrote Mrs. Ward to her publisher when the book had been out a week. "The Master of Balliol writes to me that it is 'the best novel since George Eliot'—'extraordinarily pathetic and interesting'—and that Louie is a sketch that Victor Hugo might have drawn. A sledgehammer article in the *British Weekly* to-night says 'it is an almost absolute failure.' Mr. Henry Grenfell and Mr. Haldane have been glued to it till they finished it. According to other people it is 'ordinary and tedious.' Well, one must possess one's soul a little, I suppose, till the real verdict emerges." The reviews were by no means all laudatory, much criticism being bestowed on the "Paris episode" of David's entanglement with Elise Delaunay, but the general verdict certainly was that it showed a marked advance on *Robert Elsmere* in artistic treatment, as well as a power of character-drawing that had not been seen since *Middlemarch*. This feeling was summed up in Walter Pater's sentence: "It seems to me to have all the forces of its predecessor at work in it, with perhaps a mellower kind of art—a more matured power of blending disparate literary gifts in one." Letters poured in upon her again, both from old friends and strangers. "Max Creighton," now Bishop of Peterborough, who was never tired of poking fun at Mrs. Ward about the "higher criticism," found time to dash off ten closely written sheets of pseudo-solemn investigation into the authenticity of David's life-story, beginning: "Though I am prepared to believe that David Grieve was a real personage, it is clear that many mythical elements have been incorporated into his history, and it is the function

of criticism to disentangle the real man from the legendary accretions which have gathered round him." Mrs. Ward replied in suitable vein, and confided to her friend that a few of the reviews had made her very sore. "I am very sorry to hear," he replied, "that some criticism has been ungenerous. . . . But I think that we all have to learn the responsibility attached to undertaking the function of a teacher, and the inevitable antagonism which the claim arouses. It has been so always. No amount of rectitude or good intentions avail."

But the warm admiration expressed by those for whose opinion she cared amply made up for the hostility of these reviews. As she said of it in her *Recollections*: "It has brought me correspondence from all parts and all classes, more intimate and striking perhaps than in the case of any other of my books." Many pages might be filled with these letters, but at a distance of thirty years two only shall be saved from oblivion, for the sake of that mere quality of delight which pervades them both and which endeared their wri. ; beyond other men to the company in which they moved. The first is from Professor Huxley; the second from Sir Edward Burne-Jones.

HODESLEA, STAVELEY ROAD,
EASTBOURNE.
February 1, 1892.

MY DEAR MARY,—

You will think I have taken my time about thanking you for *David Grieve*; but a virtuous resolution to stick to a piece of work I have had on hand for a long time interfered with my finishing it before last night. The temptation was severe, and as I do not often stick to virtuous resolutions under these circumstances, I parade the fact.

I think the account of the Parisian episode of David's life the strongest thing you have done yet. It is alive—every word of it—and without note or comment produces its ethical effect after the manner of that "gifted authoress," Dame Nature, who never moralizes.

Being "nobbut a heathen," I should have liked the rest to be in the same vein—the picture of a man hoping

nothing, rejecting all speculative corks and bladders—strong only in the will "im Ganzen, Guten, Wahren resolut zu leben," and accepting himself for more or less a failure—yet battling to the end. But you are on the side of the angels.

We are very proud of Julian's apotheosis. He is a most delightful imp, and the way in which he used to defy me, on occasion, when he was here, was quite refreshing. The strength of his conviction that people who interfere with his freedom are certainly foolish, probably wicked, is quite Gladstonian.

My wife joins in love.

Ever yours affectionately,

T. H. HUXLEY.

THE GRANGE,
49, NORTH END ROAD,
WEST KENSINGTON, W.
Saturday morning.

MY DEAR MRS. WARD,—

The book has just come—and to my pride and delight with such a pretty autograph: so that to-day I am mightily set up. I cannot tell you how comforting the words read to me—and how sunny they have made this grey day. By the messenger who takes this I send a little drawing, done in gold, which for a whole year past I have meant for you—it was to reach you by your last birthday, but I was ill then with this vile plague that is devastating us, and after that there seemed no reason for sending it one day more than another, and as I looked at it again it didn't seem good enough, and I thought one day you would come and choose a little souvenir of friendship—one perhaps more to your liking—but this day has never come, and all the year through illnesses big or little have pursued me and nipped all plans. But will you take it with my love—real grateful love; it's a kind of Urania sort of person, and will be proud to live in your bower in the country.

We are a poor lot—my wife kept to her room for about a month; Phil imprisoned in a room with carbolic curtains round him as if he were a leper, and I—too ignominious at present to be spoken about—longing to

go out and see an omnibus—I *should* like to see an omnibus again!

My love to you all,
Yours, E. B. J.

P.S.—The first day I can get out I shall call and take my chance of seeing you. Don't dream of writing about the poor little drawing; I should be ashamed, and you are full of work.

The "kind of Urania sort of person" shed a radiance all her own over our house from that day onwards, and was removed before long to a "country bower" after Mrs. Ward's own heart.

For early in 1892 her attention was drawn by her old friend, Mr. (now Sir James) Thursfield, who lived near Berkhamsted, to the fact that some five miles farther from London, in the heart of a district as rural and unspoilt as any that could be found in England, stood a comfortable eighteenth-century house of medium size which happened recently to have come into the market. Sir Edward Grey had just inherited it through his mother under the will of old James Adam Gordon, its possessor in the 'forties and 'fifties; but since the place was far from any trout-stream he did not propose to live in it, but wished instead to find a tenant to take it for a term of years. Its name was simply "Stocks," and though the house itself was only 120 years old, a far older manor-house had been pulled down to make way for it; while the little estate—"the stokkes of the parish of Aldbury"—is mentioned in a fifteenth-century charter as forming an outlying part of the huge diocese of Lincoln. Mr. Thursfield persuaded Mr. and Mrs. Ward to come and see it, winter though it was. They fell in love with it there and then, and within a few weeks it was decided that Grayswood should be sold and Stocks taken for seven years. Mrs. Ward felt that she had found at last the home she had been seeking.

"You know how we have always hankered after an old place with old trees," she wrote to her brother Willie, "and when the Thursfields made us come down and see the place and declared we must and should take it we couldn't in the end resist! It has such an old walled

garden, such a beautiful lime avenue, such delicious old hollies and oaks, such woods behind it and about it! The house is bigger in the way of bedrooms than Haslemere, but otherwise not more formidable, and though the inside has no particular features (the outside is charming) we shall manage I think to make it habitable and pretty. One great attraction to me is that it is so near Euston and therefore to the Hall and all its works. I don't mean to say that we are taking it on any but the most ordinary selfish principles!—but still, I like to think that I can make Marchmont Hall, and the people who congregate about it, free of it as I cannot do of Haslemere, and that there is a hungry demand in that part of London for the fruit and flowers with which the place must overflow in the summer. I believe also that the change will help me a good deal in my work, and that at Stocks I shall be able to see something of the genuine English country life which I never could at Haslemere. But we had got to love Haslemere all the same, and it is an up-rooting."

The little house on Grayswood Hill was indeed loath to let her go. She went there alone at the end of February, when plain and hill lay steeped in a flood of spring sunshine. " If only the place had not looked so lovely yesterday and to-day! " she wrote. " We have been hung in infinite air over the most ethereal of plains." But when Stocks finally received her, at midsummer, 1892, she knew in her heart that all was well; that " something " deep down in her nature " that stands more rubs than anything else in our equipment " was satisfied—satisfied with the quiet lines of the chalk hills, with the beechwoods that clothed their sides, and stretched away, she knew, for miles beyond the horizon; with the neighbourhood of that ancient life of the soil that surrounded her in village and scattered farm. She had found her home; she was to live in it and love it for eight-and-twenty years.

CHAPTER VI

THE STRUGGLE WITH ILL-HEALTH—*MARCELLA* AND *SIR GEORGE TRESSADY*—THE BUILDING OF THE PASSMORE EDWARDS SETTLEMENT

1892–1897

THE acquisition of Stocks in the summer of 1892 was a landmark in Mrs. Ward's life for more reasons than one, for it coincided with the advent of a mysterious ailment, or disability, from which she was never to be wholly free for the rest of her life. She had hardly been in the new house a fortnight before she succumbed to a violent attack of internal pain, showing symptoms of gastric catarrh, but also affecting the nerves of the right leg. It crippled her for many weeks and exercised the minds of both the local and the London doctors. Some believed that the cause of it must be a "floating kidney," others that the pain was merely neuralgic, while Mrs. Ward herself, with that keen interest in the human organism and that instinct for self-doctoring which made her so embarrassing a patient, watched the effect of each remedy and suggested others with pathetic ingenuity. She had her better days, when she was able to go down to the old walled kitchen-garden—about 300 yards from the house—in a bath-chair, but whenever she tried to walk, even a little, the pain returned in aggravated form. Only those who watched her through those two summer months knew what heroic efforts she made to master it and to throw herself into the writing of her new book, *Marcella*, or how her "spirit grew" as the days of comparative relief were followed ever and again by days of collapse. While she was still in the thick of the struggle she received a visit from her American friend, Miss Sarah Orne Jewett, whose impressions of the day were written immediately to Mrs.

Whitman, in Boston, and give a vivid picture of Mrs. Ward as she appeared at that time to so shrewd and sympathetic an observer.[1] (Aug. 20, 1892).

"Yesterday we spent the day with Mrs. Humphry Ward, who has been ill for a while and is just getting better. Somehow, she seemed so much younger and more girlish than I expected. I long to have you know Mrs. Ward. She is very clear and shining in her young mind, brilliant and full of charm, and with a lovely simplicity and sincerity of manner. I think of her with warmest affection, and a sacred expectation of what she is sure to do if she keeps strong, and sorrow does not break her eager young heart too soon. Her life burns with a very fierce flame, and she has not in the least done all that she can do, but just now it seems to me that her vigour is a good deal spent."

The "spent vigour" was only another word for bodily illness, but some weeks after Miss Jewett's visit the first signs of relief appeared. Her London doctor introduced her to a new drug, phenacetin, which worked wonders with the sore side and leg. Phenacetin and all its kindred "tabloids" came into common use at Stocks from that time onwards, in spite of the mockery of her friends. Mrs. Ward developed an extraordinary skill in the use of these "little drugs," and would often baffle her doctors by her theories of their effects. At any rate, they bore a remarkable part in the complicated struggle between her work and her health, which was to occupy the next few years, and Mrs. Ward always staunchly believed in them.

The improvement continued steadily, so that she was able, that autumn, to undertake a speaking-tour in Lancashire and Yorkshire on behalf of University Hall, finding wherever she went the most astonishing welcome. At Manchester she went, after her own meetings were over, to a great Unitarian gathering in the Free Trade Hall, stipulating that she was not to speak; but at the end she was entrapped, nevertheless. Her husband received the following account of it.

"Then at the very end, to my sorrow, the chairman announced that Mrs. Humphry Ward was present, and

[1] *Letters of Sarah Orne Jewett*, edited by Annie Fields, p. 95.

had been asked to speak, but was not well enough to do so! Whereupon there were such groans from the audience, and I felt it so absurd to be sitting there pleading illness that I could only move up to the desk, wondering whether I could possibly make myself heard in such a place. Then they all rose, and such applause as you never heard! It was a good thing that a certain number of people had left to catch early trains, or it would have been still more overwhelming to me. I just managed to say half a dozen words, and I think I said them with sufficient ease, but whether they carried to the back of the hall I don't know. It certainly must be very exciting to be able to speak easily to such a responsive multitude."

At Leeds the same kind of experience awaited her, though on a smaller scale. "I should not have been mortal if I had not been deeply touched by their feeling towards me and towards the books," she wrote. "And what a strong independent world of its own all this north-country Nonconformity is! I feel as though these experiences were invaluable to me as a novelist. One never dreamt of all this at Oxford."

The improvement in health, which had enabled her to face the strain of this tour, was not of long duration. Many letters in the winter complain of the "dragging pain" in the right leg, which prevents her from walking more than fifty yards without being "brought up sharp till the pain and stiffness have gone off again—which they do with resting." By the following June (1893) she was as ill as ever she had been in the preceding summer. The London doctor adopted the theory of the "shifting kidney," but encouraged her to allow herself to be carried up and downstairs at Stocks, so as to lie in the summer garden. "I am afraid this tendency may mean times of pain for me in the future," she writes, "but it is not dangerous, and need not prevent my working just as usual. I *am* so enjoying the sight of the flowers again, and this afternoon I shall somehow get to the lime on the lawn. It had given me quite a pang at my heart to think the lime-blossom would go and I not see it! One has fewer years to waste now."

She was hard at work on the writing of *Marcella* throughout this year, but the fact that she could not sit up at a

table without bringing on a "wild fit of pain," as she described it once, meant that she had to cultivate the art of writing in bed or in her garden chair, a proceeding which was very apt to produce attacks of writer's cramp. Elaborate erections of writing-boards had to be built up around her, so as to enable as many as possible of Dr. Wolff's precepts to be carried out, but it was a weary business, and often the hand would drop lame for a while, in spite of the author's longing to be "at" her characters. This joy of creation was, however, her principal stay during these months of pain and weakness.

To Mr. George Murray Smith,

September 8, 1893.

"I, alas! cannot get well, though I am no doubt somewhat better than when you were here. The horrid ailment, whatever it is, will not go away, and work is rather a struggle. Still it is also my great stand-by and consolation,—by the help of it I manage to avoid the depression which otherwise this long *malaise* and weakness must have brought with it. A walk to the kitchen-garden and back yesterday gave me a bad night and fresh pain to-day, and I cannot travel with any comfort. But I can get along, and soon we shall be in London and I must try some fresh doctoring. Meanwhile I have written nearly a volume since we came down, which is not so bad."

All through the autumn of this year she grew more and more absorbed in her story, while her health improved slightly, though walking was still an unattainable joy. The life of the little village of Aldbury, half a mile from the house, which she wove into so many scenes of *Marcella*, had an immense fascination for her. She would drive down in her pony-carriage, whenever she could find time, to spend an hour with old Mrs. Swabey or Mrs. Bradsell, or with Johnny Dolt, the postmaster, gleaning from their old-world gossip the elemental life-story of the country-side, or hearing the echoes of the bloody tragedy which had convulsed the village just before we came to it, in December, 1891. For while the old lady of Stocks (Mrs. Bright) lay dying, a murderous affray had occurred in the wood, not a

mile from the house, between the gamekeeper and his lad on the one side, and a band of poachers on the other. The keeper was shot dead, and the lad, who fled for his life into the open, down towards a spreading beech in the hollow below, was followed and beaten to death with the butt-end of a gun. No wonder that Mrs. Ward took the tale and made it the dominating theme of her story, weaving into it new threads that the sordid tragedy itself did not possess—of the poacher Hurd, the dying child, the piteous little wife. The village itself was somewhat agape, we used to think, over the proceedings of the new mistress of Stocks, who would have "grand folks" down from London to spend their Sundays with her, but who had also taken a cottage on purpose for the reception of tired people from the back streets, and who was constantly having parties down from "some place in London" to enjoy the garden and the shady trees. The place in question was Marchmont Hall, for whose cricket team we children preserved a private but invincible contempt; but the elderly Associates became real friends, and soon learnt to know Stocks and its environs with more than a passing knowledge. Sometimes they would come down just for a day's outing, but more often they, or the club-girls, or some ailing mother and baby would stay for a fortnight at the Convalescent Cottage under the care of the loquacious Mrs. Dell, whose memory must still be green in many London hearts. A natural philosopher, reared on the Bible and her own shrewd observation of life, Mrs. Dell was the ideal matron for the London folk who were sent down to her; she took them all in under her large embrace, though her opinion of their "draggled" faces when they arrived was anything but complimentary. She was wont to express herself, in fact, with considerable freedom about London life. Once one of her guests—a working-man—had gone back to town for the week-end, feeling bored in the country. "And pray what can 'e do in London?" she asked with magnificent scorn. "Nothin' but titter-totter on the paves!"

And besides the Convalescent Cottage, there stood on the same steep slope of hill, just under the hanging wood, with its mixture of beech, ash and wild cherry, another little house, known simply as Stocks Cottage, which Mr. Ward acquired to round off the miniature estate early in

1895. It became a source of unmixed joy to Mrs. Ward, for she could lend or let it to many different friends, from Graham Wallas and Bernard Shaw, who came to it during one of her absences abroad, and thence roamed the downs with the daughter she had left behind, preaching collectivism and Jaeger clothes—to the Neville Lytteltons, who spent seven consecutive summers in the little place, from 1895 to 1901. The Cottage, indeed, became a very intimate part of Mrs. Ward's life at Stocks, and its mistress, Mrs. Lyttelton, one of her closest friends.

Marcella was finished, after a long struggle against sleeplessness, headache and a bad bout of writer's cramp, on January 31, 1894. A characteristic passage occurred between the author and her publisher immediately afterwards. Mr. Smith had sent her, according to promise, a considerable sum in advance of royalty, setting forth at the same time, with his habitual candour, the exact sum which his firm expected to make from the same number of copies. Mrs. Ward thought it not enough, and wrote at once to propose a decrease of royalty on the first 2,000 copies. "I hardly know what to say," replied Mr. Smith. "It is not often that a publisher receives such a letter from an author." But after mutual bargainings—all of an inverted character—they arrived at a satisfactory agreement.

Mrs. Ward fled to Italy with husband and daughter to escape the appearance of the book, and saw herself flaunted on the posters of the English papers in the Piazza di Spagna early in April. It was indeed an exhilarating time for her, for there were few harsh voices among the reviewers on this occasion, while the many letters from her friends were as kind as ever. A typical opinion was that of Sir Francis Jeune: "I was charmed with sentence after sentence of perfect finish and point, such as no other writer of fiction in the present day ever attempts and certainly could not sustain. They are a delight in themselves, and the care bestowed on them is the highest compliment to a reader. May I add that I think the dramatic force of some scenes—I single out the morning of Hurd's execution, and the death of Hallin, but there are several more—is greatly in advance of anything even you have done, and touches a very high

point in comparison with any scenes in English fiction. I think George Eliot never surpassed them." In her *Recollections* Mrs. Ward describes the coming out of *Marcella* as "perhaps the happiest date in my literary life," for it not only gave her unalloyed joy in itself, but it coincided also with a comparative return to health—though always with ups and downs. Yet the immense publicity which the success of the book brought her was also a grievous burden, and she gives vent to this feeling in a letter to Mr. Gladstone, written in reply to his own words of thanks for the gift of the book:

25, Grosvenor Place
May 6, 1894.

My dear Mr. Gladstone,—

It was charming of you to write to me,—one of those kindnesses which, apart from all your greatness, win to you the hearts of so many. I am so glad that the eyes are better for a time, and that you have shaken off your influenza.

We have just come back from a delightful seven weeks in Italy, at Rome, Siena and Florence, and I am much rested, though still, I am vexed to say, very lame and something of an invalid. The success of *Marcella*, however, has been a most pleasant tonic, though I always find the first few weeks after the appearance of a book an agitating and trying time, however smoothly things go! The great publicity which our modern conditions involve seems to wear one's nerves; and I suppose it is inevitable that women should feel such things more than men, who so often, through the training of school and college and public life, get used to them from their childhood.

Your phrase about "prospective work" gave me real delight. I have been enjoying and pondering over the translations of Horace in the *Nineteenth Century*. Horace is the one Latin poet whom I know fairly well, and often read, though this year, in Italy, I think I realized the spell of Virgil more than ever before. Will you go on, I wonder, from the love-poems to a gathering from the others? I wanted to claim of you three or four in particular, but as I turn over the pages I see in two or three

minutes at least twenty that jostle each other to be named, so it is no good!

Believe me,
Yours most sincerely,
MARY A. WARD.

Marcella, like her two predecessors, first appeared in three-volume form, but Mrs. Ward's quarrel with the big libraries for starving their subscribers, which had been simmering ever since *David Grieve*, became far more acute over the new book. She reported to George Smith on May 24 that "Sir Henry Cunningham told us last night that he had made a tremendous protest to Mudie's against their behaviour in the matter of *Marcella*—which he seems to have told them he regarded as a fraud on the public, or rather on their subscribers, whom they were *bound* to supply with new books!" This feud, together with the desire of the American *Century Magazine* to publish her next novel in serial form, provided it were only half the length of *Marcella*, induced her to consider seriously the question of writing shorter books. "It would be difficult for me, with my tendency to interminableness," she admitted to George Smith, "to promise to keep within such limits. However, it might be good for me!" Soon afterwards the decision was made, and with it the knell of the three-volume novel sounded, for other novelists soon followed Mrs. Ward's example. The resulting brevity of modern novels (always excepting Mr. William de Morgan and Mr. Conrad) is thus largely due to the flaming up of an old quarrel between librarians on the one side and publishers and authors on the other, as it occurred in the case of Mrs. Ward's *Marcella*.

The summer of 1894 was a period of comparative physical ease, during which Mrs. Ward found that although she was still unable to walk more than a very little, she could ride an old pony we possessed with much profit and pleasure, of course at a foot pace. Thus she was enabled to explore some of the woods and hill-sides around Stocks which she had never yet visited, a pastime which gave her exquisite delight. But by the following winter both her persistent plagues had reappeared in aggravated form. "My hand is extremely troublesome, alas!" she wrote to her father,

" and the internal worry has been worse again lately. It is so trying week after week never to feel well, or like other people! One lives one's life, but it makes it all more of a struggle. And as there is this organic cause for it, one can only look forward to being sometimes better and less conscious of it than at others, but never to being quite well. However, one needn't grumble, for I manage to enjoy my life greatly in spite of it, and to fill the days pretty full." And to her husband, who was away on a lecturing-tour in America, she wrote in February, 1895: " Alas! for my hand. It is more seriously disabled than it has been for months and months, and I really ought to give it a month's complete rest. If it were not for the *Century* I would! "

This unusual disablement was due no doubt to the extraordinary concentration of effort which she had just put forth in the writing of her village tale of *Bessie Costrell*—a tale based on an actual occurrence in the village of Aldbury, the tragic details of which absorbed her so much as to amount almost to possession. She finished it in fifteen days, and gave it to George Smith, who always cherished a special affection for this " grimy little tale," as Mrs. Ward called it.

When he had brought it out, the world devoured it with enthusiasm—so much so that her true friend and mentor, Henry James, whose opinion she valued more highly than any other, thought fit to address a friendly admonition to her:

> " May 8, 1895. I think the tale very straightforward and powerful—very direct and vivid, full of the real and the *juste*. I like your unalembicated rustics—they are a tremendous rest after Hardy's—and the infallibility of your feeling for village life. Likewise I heartily hope you will labour in this field and farm again. *But* I won't pretend to agree with one or two declarations that have been wafted to me to the effect that this little tale is " the best thing you've done." It has even been murmured to me that *you* think so. This I don't believe, and at any rate I find, for myself, your best in your dealings with *data* less simple, on a plan less simple. This means, however, mainly, that I hope you won't abandon *anything* that you have shewn you can do, but

only go on with this *and* that—and the other—especially the other!

Yours, dear Mrs. Ward,
most truly,
HENRY JAMES.

Meanwhile, in spite of the drawback of her continued ill-health, she derived throughout these years an ever-increasing pleasure from the friendships with which she was surrounded. Both in the London house, which they had acquired early in 1891 (25 Grosvenor Place), and at Stocks, she loved to gather many friends about her, though the effort of entertaining them was often a sore tax upon her slender strength. Her Sunday parties at Stocks brought together men and women from many different worlds—political, literary and philanthropic—with whom the talk ranged over all the questions and persons of the day from breakfast till lunch, from lunch till tea, and from tea till dinner; but after dinner, in sheer exhaustion, the party would usually take refuge in what were known, derisively, as "intellectual games." Mrs. Ward herself was not particularly good at these diversions, but she loved to watch the efforts of others, and they did give a rest, after all, from the endless talk! On one such occasion the game selected was the variety known as "riddle game," in which a name and a thing are written down at random by different players, and the next tries to give a reason why the person should be like the thing. Lord Acton, who had that day devoured ten books of Biblical criticism that Mrs. Ward had placed in his room, and would infinitely have preferred to go on talking about them, found himself confronted by the question: "Why is Lord Rothschild like a poker?" For a long time he sat contemplating the paper, then scribbled down in desperation: "Because he is upright," and retired impenetrably behind an eleventh book. But Mr. Asquith made up for all deficiencies by his ingenuity in this form of nonsense. "Why is Irving like a wheelbarrow?" demanded one of the little papers that came round to him, and while the rest of us floundered in heavy jokes Mr. Asquith found the exact answer: "Because he serves to fill up the pit and carry away the boxes."

Politics were of absorbing interest to Mrs. Ward, and

though her own views remained decidedly Unionist on the Irish question, in home affairs they were sufficiently mixed to make free discussion not only possible, but delightful to her. She still retained her old friendship for Mr. Morley, and probably the majority of her Parliamentary friends at this time were of the Liberal persuasion. 1895 was the year of the "cordite division" and the fall of Lord Rosebery's Government, involving many of these friends in the catastrophe. Mr. Morley was defeated at Newcastle and went to recover his serenity in the Highlands, whither Mrs. Ward sent him a copy of *Bessie Costrell*, provoking the following letter from her old friend and master:

August 6, 1895.

MY DEAR MRS. WARD,—

It was most pleasant to me to receive the little volume, in its pretty dress, and with the friendly dedication. It will take its place among my personal treasures, and I am truly grateful to you for thinking of me.

The story is full of interest to me, and in the vein of a true realism, humanising instead of brutalising. The "severity" of the poor dead woman's look, and the whole of that page, redeems with a note of just pity all the sordid elements. . . . We are quartered in one of the most glorious of highland glens, five and twenty miles from a railway, and nearly as many hours from London. Now and then my thoughts wander to Westminster, passing round by way of Newcastle, but I quickly cast Satan behind me—and try to cultivate a steady-eyed equanimity, which shall not be a stupid insensibility to either one's personal catastrophe or to the detriment which the commonwealth has just suffered. If life were not so short—I sometimes think it is far too long—I should see some compensations in the deluge that has come upon the Liberal party. It will do them good to be sent to adjust their compasses. The steering had been very blind in these latter days. Perhaps some will tell you that my own bit of steering was the very blindest of all. I know that you are disposed to agree with such folk, and I know that Irish character (for which English government, by the way, is wholly responsible), is difficult stuff to work with. But the policy was right, and I beg

you not to think—as I once told the H. of C.—that the Irish sphinx is going to gather up her rags, and depart from your gates in meekness."

During these months another Liberal friend, Mr. Sydney Buxton, was taking infinite pains to pilot Mrs. Ward through the intricacies of the Parliamentary situation required for the book she was now writing, *Sir George Tressady*—drawing her a coloured plan of the House and the division-lobbies for the scene of Tressady's "ratting," and generally supervising the details of Marcella Maxwell's Factory Bill. "I am sure it is owing to you," wrote Mrs. Ward to him afterwards, "that the political framework has not at any rate stood in the way of the book's success, as I feared at one time it might." She herself had regularly put herself to school to learn every detail of the system of sweated home-work prevalent in the East End of London at that time; wading through piles of Blue-books, visiting the actual scenes under the care of a Factory Inspector, or of Lord Rothschild's Jewish secretary; learning much from her Fabian friends, Mrs. Sidney Webb and Mr. Graham Wallas.

"As to Maxwell's Bill itself," she wrote to Mr. Buxton, "after my talk with you and Mr. Gerald Balfour, I took the final idea of it from some evidence of Sidney Webb's before the Royal Commission. There he says that he can perfectly well imagine, and would like to see tried, a special Factory Act for East London, and I find the same thing foreshadowed in various other things on Factory Law I have been reading. And some weeks ago I talked over the idea with Mr. Haldane, who thought it quite conceivable, and added that 'London would bear quietly what would make Nottingham or Leeds revolt.' If such a Bill is possible or plausible, that I think is all a novelist wants. For of course one cannot describe *the real*, and yet one wants something which is not merely fanciful, but might be, under certain circumstances. The whole situation lies as it were some ten years ahead, and I have made use of a remark of Gerald Balfour's to me on the Terrace, when we had been talking over the new Factory Bill. 'There is not much difference between Parties,' he said, agreeing with you—'but I should not wonder if, within the next few years, we saw some reaction in these matters,' by which I suppose he

meant if the Home Office power were over-driven, or the Acts administered too vexatiously.

"Do you see that they have lately been repealing some Factory legislation concerning women's labour in France? We are not France, but we might conceivably, don't you think, have a period of discontent?"

When the book at length appeared, in September, 1896, Mrs. Ward was afraid that it would hardly float under the weight of its politics, but this was not so, for it sold 15,000 copies within a week, and never, perhaps, were the reviews more cordial. The relation between the two women, Letty and Marcella, was universally felt to be one of the best things she had ever attempted, while the greater compression of the book was accepted with a sigh of relief.

"Mrs. Ward is wisely content," said the *Leeds Mercury*, "to take more for granted, and with true artistic instinct to leave room for the play of her readers' imagination; we are saved, consequently, tedious details, and that over-elaboration of incident, if not of plot, which was one of the most conspicuous blemishes in her previous works. She is beginning also to believe that brevity is the soul of art, as well as of wit, and therefore, without any sacrifice of the essential points in her narrative, she has found it possible—by discarding padding—to state all that she has to tell about 'Sir George Tressady' in considerably less than six hundred pages, instead of making her old, unconscionable demand for at least a thousand. It would not be true to say that Mrs. Ward has lost all her literary mannerisms, or even affectations, but they are falling rapidly into the background—one proof amongst many, that she is mastering at length the secret of that blended strength and simplicity of style which all writers envy, but to which few attain."

Two opinions, expressed by such opposite critics as Mrs. Sidney Webb and Mr. Rudyard Kipling, may be of interest to this day:

"The story is very touching," wrote Mrs. Webb, "and you have an indescribable power of making your readers sympathize with all your characters, even with Letty and her unlovely mother-in-law. Of course, as a strict

utilitarian, I am inclined to estimate the book more in its character of treatise than as a novel. From this point of view it is the most useful bit of work that has been done for many a long day. You have managed to give the arguments for and against factory legislation and a fixed standard of life with admirable lucidity and picturesqueness—in a way that will make them comprehensible to the ordinary person without any technical knowledge. I especially admire your real intellectual impartiality and capacity to give the best arguments on both sides, though naturally I am glad to see that your sympathy is on the whole with us on those questions.

"Pray accept my thanks from a public as well as a personal point of view for the gift of the book to the world and to myself."

And Mr. Kipling wrote:

"DEAR MRS. WARD,—

I am delighted to have *Sir George Tressady* from your hand. I have followed him from month to month with the liveliest wonder as to how the inevitable smash in his affairs was to fall, and now that I have read the tale as a whole I see that of course there was but one way. Like all human books it has the unpleasant power of making you think and bother as one only bothers over real folk: but how splendidly you have done the lighter relief-work! 'Fifteen out of a possible twelve' has already been adopted as a household word by us, who have two babies.

"It will always be one of the darkest mysteries to me that any human being can make a beginning, end *and* middle to a really truly long story. I can think them by scores, but I have not the hand to work out the full frieze. It is just the difference between the deep-sea steamer with twelve hundred people aboard, besides the poor beggars sweating and scorching in the stoke-hold, and the coastwise boat with a mixed cargo of 'notions.' And so, when the liner sees fit to salute the coaster in passing, that small boat is mightily encouraged."

But the writing of *Sir George Tressady* had been carried out against greater handicaps of physical suffering and nervous strain than perhaps any of Mrs. Ward's previous

books. She had agreed to let the *Century Magazine* publish it serially from November 1, 1895, and had fully intended to have it finished, at any rate in provisional form, by that date. But ill-health and her absorption in the affairs of University Hall retarded its progress, so that when November came there were still eight or nine chapters to write, and those the most difficult and critical of the book. The *Century* cabled for more copy, but at the same time Mrs. Ward fell a victim to "a new ailment," as she wrote to her father, "and what with that and the perpetual struggle with the hand, which will not let me write lying down, I hardly know how to get through sometimes." She was advised to have what the surgeons assured her would be a "slight" operation, but put it off until after a Christmas month at Stocks, during which she devoted herself, crippled as she was, to the writing of *Tressady*. Hardly would she have "got through" these weeks at all—for by now the demands on her time, the letters and requests to speak were endless—had she not discovered during this winter a secretary, Miss Bessie Churcher, whose wonderful qualities made her not only Mrs. Ward's closest helper and friend during the whole remainder of her life, but have impressed themselves for good, through many years' devotion, on the public work of London.

When Mrs. Ward at last found time to put herself in the surgeons' hands, the operation which ensued was clumsily performed, and left her with yet another burden to carry through all her later life. After it she lay for days in such pain as the doctors had neither foreseen nor prophesied, while the nervous shock of the operation itself was aggravated, one night, by the antics of a drunken nurse, who came into her room with a lighted lamp in her hand and deposited it, swaying and lurching, upon the floor. Fortunately help was at hand and the nurse removed, but the terror of the moment did not forward Mrs. Ward's recovery. It was many weeks before sleep came back to her, many weeks before she could sit up with any comfort or move with ease. But the book must be finished, in spite of aches and pains, and finished it was within ten weeks of the operation (March 22, 1896). George Tressady's death in the dark galleries of the mine "possessed" her as she had only been possessed by the tale of Bessie Costrell, and

helped her no doubt to master the host of her physical ills. But when the strain was over she was fit for nothing but to be taken out to Italy, there to recover, if she could, under the stimulus of that magic light and air which appealed—so at least we used to imagine—to something in her own far-off southern blood. At Cadenabbia, on Lake Como, health began to return to her; at Padua she was "doing more walking than she had dreamed of for four years," and with the revival of her strength she wrote home in sheer joy of spirit, "All Italy to me is enchanted ground!" But alas, it was too early to rejoice. She came again to the Lake of Como to have a fortnight's complete rest before returning home—staying at the Villa Serbelloni, above Bellagio—and there unduly overtaxed her new-found powers. She must make her way to the ruined tower of San Giovanni that looks at you from its hill-top beyond the little town, and since the path was *non-carrozzabile* she would make the ascent on foot. The adventure was pure joy to her, the views of the lake all the more intoxicating for having been won by her own strength of limb. But the next day a violent attack of her old and still unexplained trouble declared itself. The journey homewards, via Lucerne, was performed under conditions of crisis which still leave a haunting memory, and though a clever Swiss doctor at Lucerne appeared to diagnose the disease more surely than any previous medicine-man, he could suggest no practicable remedy. Mrs. Ward continued to suffer from her obscure ailment to a greater or less degree for the rest of her life, as well as from the results of the operation; but on the whole the attacks became less frequent, or less severe, as the years went on. She developed an extraordinary skill in fighting them, by the aid of the thousand and one little drugs before-mentioned, and often derived a keen pleasure from the sense of having met and routed an old enemy. But the enemy was always there, lying in wait for her if she walked more, say, than half a mile at a time. It is well to remember that her life from 1892 onwards was conducted under that constant handicap.

Yet it was during the years in which her illness was most acute that she carried to a successful conclusion her labours for the foundation of the Passmore Edwards Settlement.

When Mr. Edwards, in May, 1894, offered to provide £4,000 towards the Building Fund of University Hall,[1] it was only the beginning of a long struggle towards the accomplishment of this design. The next step was to interest the Duke of Bedford—as the ground-landlord of that part of London—in the scheme. This Mrs. Ward succeeded in doing during the summer of 1894, thus laying the foundation of a co-operation that was to ripen into a strong mutual regard. The Duke took a keen personal interest in the finding of a suitable site for the new building, and when such a site became available in Tavistock Place, offered it to the Committee at less than its market value, and contributed £800 towards the building fund. Oddly enough, however, this site—for which the contract was actually signed in February, 1895—was not that on which the Settlement stands to-day, but lay on the opposite side of the street; the disadvantage to it being that there would have been a delay of two years in obtaining possession, owing to existing tenants' rights. When, therefore, an equally good site actually fell vacant in the same street a few months later, the Duke willingly released the Committee from their contract and made over to them the ground on which the Settlement now stands on a 999 years' lease. In the meantime Mr. Passmore Edwards had raised his original offer from £4,000 to £7,000, and then to £10,000; the total fund stood at over £12,000, and Mr. Norman Shaw agreed to preside over an architects' competition and to judge between the various designs submitted. All connected with University Hall rejoiced greatly when the award fell to two young residents of the Hall, Messrs. Dunbar Smith and Cecil Brewer, whose simple yet beautiful design far surpassed those of the other competitors. But according to the instructions of the Committee itself the building was to cost up to £12,000, while the price of the site was £5,000, and a further sum would be required for furnishing. Mrs. Ward set herself to the task of raising further funds with her accustomed energy, but her illness during the winter of 1895–6 greatly hampered her, and the fund rose all too slowly for her eager spirit. Meanwhile the builders' tenders soared in the opposite direction. When she returned from Italy and Lucerne in May, 1896, she found the situation

[1] See p. 91.

critical; either fresh plans of a far less ambitious nature must be asked for, or a further sum of £3,500 must be raised at once. Mr. R. G. Tatton, already one of the most active members of the Council, and soon to be appointed Warden, believed that the only hope lay in Mr. Passmore Edwards, but told Mrs. Ward plainly that the benefactor had said he could do no more unless others showed a corresponding interest. Mr. Tatton boldly asked Mrs. Ward herself to lay down £1,000. This she did; a fortunate legacy of £500 came in at the same moment, and Mr. Edwards gave an additional £2,000 with the best grace in the world. Yet once more, on the night of the formal opening, nearly two years later, did he come forward with a similar donation, making £14,000 in all. He showed throughout a steadfast faith in the working ideals of the Settlement that triumphed over all minor difficulties; Mrs. Ward described him once as possessed by "the very passion of giving." No wonder that the Committee decided, long before the new building was completed, to call it by his name.

Thus Mrs. Ward could have the happiness, during the years 1896 and 1897, of seeing the beautiful building for which she had toiled so hard rise and take bodily shape before her eyes. She became fast friends with the two young architects, who had so decisively won the competition, and who now devoted themselves indefatigably to the supervision of the work. She formed, early in 1897, a General Committee for the new Settlement, the wide and representative character of which showed how warm was the sympathy entertained for the new venture not only in London, but also in Oxford, Cambridge and Manchester. And she devoted herself to the formation of a Lectureship Committee, named after Benjamin Jowett, which was to carry on, within the new organization, the religious ideals of University Hall. The Settlement itself rested on a purely secular basis, but the Council fully agreed to the inclusion of the following clause as one of the "Objects" in the Memorandum of Association: "To promote the study of the Bible and of the history of religion in the light of the best available results of criticism and research." The Jowett Lectureship Committee was established in order to carry out this clause, and a sum of £100 per annum was placed at its disposal from the general revenue of the

Settlement—a small result, it may be argued, of all the missionary effort put forth in the founding of University Hall seven years before. But the Settlement itself stood there as the result of that effort, and as Mrs. Ward looked down, on October 10, 1897, on the packed audience that assembled in the new hall to hear her opening address, she might well feel that her dreams had come to a more solid fruition than she could ever have dared to hope. But even then she did not know the whole. There sat the mothers and the fathers, with faces eager and expectant, ready to throw themselves into this big experiment that was opening out before them. Mrs. Ward welcomed them with her whole heart; yet this was not all: the children were at the gates.

CHAPTER VII

CHILDREN AND ADULTS AT THE PASSMORE EDWARDS SETTLEMENT — THE FOUNDATION OF THE INVALID CHILDREN'S SCHOOL

1897–1899

FOR some two or three years before the opening of the new Settlement, a Saturday morning "play-room" for children had been held at Marchmont Hall, mainly under the direction of Miss Mary Neal, who, as the founder of the Esperance Club for factory girls, and one of the "Sisters" working under Rev. Hugh Price Hughes, had already made her name beloved in the slums of St. Pancras. In that shabby little room she had taught them Old English games and dances, till even the street outside grew merry with the sound of their music, and many were the groups of children seen playing "Old Roger is dead" or "Looby Loo" at street corners during the other days of the week. Mrs. Ward had been much attracted by the experiment, which was hampered, like everything else at Marchmont Hall, by lack of space; and now that the fine new buildings were available she was eager to transplant it and to carry it further. My diary for Saturday, October 16, 1897, duly records that "D. and Miss Churcher and I went to the Settlement at ten to superintend the children's play-hour, which we are now going to have every Saturday in the big hall. It was a perfect pandemonium this time, as we hadn't prepared any sort of organization, and there were at least 120 children to deal with. We also had to give each child a pair of list slippers to put on over its own boots, and this was a tremendous business and took over half an hour. Miss Neal made them a little speech before we began the games, and then we all formed rings and played Looby Loo and others of that stamp for nearly an hour more."

From these unpromising beginnings sprang the whole of the "organized recreation" for children which gradually arose at the new Settlement, with the object of attracting the child population of the district away from the streets after school hours. Mrs. Ward guided and inspired the movement, though she left the actual carrying on of the classes to younger and more robust members of her group; but she formed a special committee (the Women's Work Committee), of which she was chairman, to watch over it all, and generally supplied the motive force, the sense of its being worth while, which inspired the ever-growing band of our helpers. One class, too, she kept as her very own—a weekly reading aloud for boys between eleven and fourteen, in the course of which she read them a great deal of Stevenson and Kipling, or brought them photographs of her travels in Italy, or talked to them sometimes of the events of the day. About thirty boys came regularly to these readings, and always behaved well with her, while she on her side came to know them individually and felt a strong affection for many of them. Where are they now, those thirty boys? How many have left their bones in the mud of Flanders, or on the heights that look towards Troas, across the narrow sea? Mrs. Ward herself was often possessed with that thought through the years of the Great War, but never, so far as I know, heard any direct news of them. All were of that fatal age that Death reaped with the least pity.

After the Saturday morning play-rooms—which fortunately improved in discipline after that first "pandemonium," and increased so much in popularity that we had to divide them into two, taking in close upon 400 children in a morning—we launched out into musical drill-classes for bigger and smaller children, story-telling for the little ones, gymnastic classes for girls and boys, a children's hour in the library, dancing and acting classes, and finally history lectures with lantern slides, designed to supplement the very meagre teaching of history that the children received in the elementary schools around. How much one learnt by hard experience, in the course of it all, of the art of keeping the children's attention—whether in teaching them a new singing-game on Saturdays, or in the story-telling to the "under elevens," or in the exciting task of going over Oliver's battles with

the young ladies and gentlemen of the fifth to seventh standards! For even these, if one lost their attention for a moment, were not above calling out "Ole Krujer!" at a somewhat forbidding slide of Sir Thomas Fairfax, while the "under elevens" would often be swept by gusts of coughing and talk that fairly drowned the voice of the story-teller, if she suffered them to lose the thread of the Princess's adventures by too gorgeous a description of the dragon. But usually they were as good as gold, sitting there packed tight on the rows of chairs (136 children on seventy-six chairs was one of our records), while the "little mothers" hugged their babies and no sound was to be heard save the sucking of toffee or liquorice-sticks.

All these occupations took place in the late afternoon, from 5.30 to 7, during the hours when the children of London, discharged from school and tea, drift aimlessly about the streets, often actually locked out from home (in those days at least) owing to the long hours worked by mother as well as father at "charing" or at the local factory. The instant response made by the child-population of St. Pancras to Mrs. Ward's piping showed that she had, as it were, stumbled upon a real and vital need of our great cities, and as a larger and larger band of helpers was drawn into our circle and more and more of the cheerful Settlement rooms came into use, the attendances of the children went up by leaps and bounds. One year after the opening they had grown to some 650 per week; by October, 1899, to 900, and in the next three or four years they touched the utmost capacity of the building by reaching 1,200. The schools in the immediate neighbourhood co-operated eagerly in the new effort, though the selection of children for our special classes often involved extra labour for the teachers; but they rose to it with enthusiasm, and would sometimes steal in to watch their children enjoying the story-telling or the library, removed from the restraint of day-school discipline, and yet "giving no trouble," as they wonderingly recognized. Mrs. Ward made friends with many of these teachers, especially with those from Manchester Street and Prospect Terrace Schools, for it was her way to establish natural human relations with every one with whom she came in contact, and the hard-working London teacher always appealed to her in a peculiar way. An incident that gave her special

pleasure was the passing of a vote of thanks to the Settlement by a neighbouring Board of Managers, " for the work done among the children of this school." How she was loved and looked up to by every one concerned—by helpers, teachers and, more dimly, by the children themselves—is not, perhaps, for me to say; but this was the note that underlay all the busy hum of the Settlement building in the children's hour, as indeed in all the other hours of its day.

Occasionally, however, some critic would observe, " Well, this is all very fine for the children, but what do the parents say about it? What becomes of *home influence* when you encourage the children to come out in this way at an hour when they ought to be at home? " The answer, of course, was that the parents themselves, and especially the more anxious and hard-working among them, were the foremost in blessing the Settlement (or the " Passmore," as it was affectionately dubbed in the neighbourhood) for the good care that it took of Sidney or Alf or Elsie; that they knew, better than anyone else, how little they could do in the miserable rooms that served them for a home for the growing boys and girls, and yet that " the streets " were full of dangers from which they longed to preserve their little ones. One or two of them became voluntary helpers at the " Recreation School," as it came to be called; many joined the " Parents' Guild " that Mrs. Ward formed from among them, and that met periodically at the Settlement for music and rest, or for a quiet talk with her about the children's doings; while all were to be seen at the summer and winter " Displays " in the big hall or in the garden, their tired faces beaming with pride at the performance of their offspring. Perhaps indeed it is the bitterest reproach of all against our civilization that in the homes of the poor, " where every process of life and death," as Mrs. Ward once put it, " has to be carried on within the same few cubic feet of space," there is no room for the growing children, who, as baby follows baby in the crowded tenement, get pushed out into the world almost before they can stand upon their feet. Mrs. Ward knew only too well the conditions of life in the mean streets of St. Pancras or the East End; her sister-in-law, Miss Gertrude Ward, who had become a District Nurse after the eight years of her life with us, had frequently taken her to

certain typical dens where such " processes of life and death " were going on, and her own researches for *Sir George Tressady* had done the rest. Add to this her intense power of imagination and of realization acting like a fire within her, and the children's work at the Passmore Edwards Settlement is all explained. She yearned to them and longed to make them happy : that was all.

Mr. Tatton, the Warden, would often say that the Recreation School was growing to be the most important side of the Settlement work, and himself, bachelor as he was, delighted to watch it ; but Mrs. Ward would not willingly have admitted this, even if it were true, for the many developments of the normal work for adults were always immensely interesting to her. Whenever she was in London (and often from Stocks too !) she contrived, in spite of ill-health and the many claims upon her time, to be at the Settlement three or four times a week, attending Council meetings and committees, showing the building to friends, talking to " Associates," old and new, or listening with delight to the wonderful concerts that took place in the big hall on Saturday evenings. For it had always been intended that music should play a very special part in the life of the Settlement, and the Council had been fortunate in securing as Musical Director Mr. Charles Williams, who, in partnership with Miss Audrey Chapman's Ladies' Orchestra, gave concerts of quite extraordinary merit there during the first year or two of the Settlement's existence. He would take his audience into his confidence, explaining, before the music began, the part of each instrument in the whole symphony, and all with so happy a touch that even untrained listeners felt transported into a world where they understood—for the moment—what Beethoven or Mozart would be at. Those evenings remain in memory as occasions of pure joy, and did much to reconcile the older Associates of Marchmont Hall to the magnificence of the new building—a magnificence which otherwise weighed rather sadly upon their spirits ! Some of them, amid the growing activity of the new life around them, confessed that they could not help regretting the old shabby days of pipe-sucking at Marchmont Hall, where the dingy premises were " a poor thing, but mine own." Mrs. Ward was distressed by this feeling, and sought to draw them in in every way to

the life and government of the place ; but one of the unforeseen features of the work was that the new Associates who joined the Settlement in considerable numbers were for the most part young people, rather than the contemporaries and friends of the Marchmont Hall Associates. Shop assistants and clerks were also on the increase, desiring to take advantage of the many facilities, social and educational, offered by the new building ; and though the new-comers were looked on with distrust by the older members, no definite rule could be laid down excluding them. Admission to the Associate body might be strictly reserved to " workmen and working women " from a definite area, but it was difficult to prove that a shopman or a clerk did not work. One thing, however, was insisted upon—that the new candidates should read over and digest the confession of faith which Mrs. Ward had drawn up in the early days of Marchmont Hall, a creed which put in simple form the aspirations of the Settlement :

" We believe that many changes in the conditions of life and labour are needed, and are coming to pass ; but we believe also that men, without any change except in themselves and in their feelings towards one another, might make this world a better and happier place.

" Therefore, with the same sympathies but different experiences of life, we meet to exchange ideas and to discuss social questions, in the hope that as we learn to know one another better, a feeling of fellowship may arise among us."

And though some of the younger candidates seemed to have joined the Settlement rather to dance at the Social Evenings than to " exchange ideas and to discuss social questions," let alone to attend the lectures and classes, still the leaven worked, so that at the end of three years the Warden could report that " an increasing number of Associates use the opportunities of the Settlement to the utmost, and are always to the front when service and help are needed. Such Associates, both men and women, are a chief source of whatever power for good the Settlement may exert."

And indeed, with what life and movement the whole building hummed on any evening of the week, in those first exciting years ! Apart altogether from the children's work,

the attendances of adults during the busy winter terms reached some 1,400 a week, and must surely have represented, when translated into terms of human aspiration or enjoyment, much lightening of the burdens and monotonies of life in the dull streets that surrounded the Settlement. Mrs. Ward herself, in an appeal in favour of the work issued in 1901, summed up in these words her feeling on the place that Settlements might fill in the life of London's workers :

"Stand in the street now and look back at the 'Community House'—the Settlement building and its surroundings. The high windows shine ; in and out pass men and women, boys and girls, going to class, or concert, or drill, to play a game of chess or billiards, or merely to sit in a pleasant and quiet room, well lit and warmed, to read a book or listen to music. To your right stretches the densely peopled district of King's Cross and Gray's Inn Road, Clerkenwell. Behind the Settlement runs the busy Euston Road, and the wilderness of Somers Town. Immediately beside you, if you turn your head, you may see the opening of a narrow street and the outline of a large block of model dwellings, whence many frequenters of the Settlement have been drawn. Carry your minds into the rooms of these old tenement houses which fill the streets east of Marchmont Street, the streets, say, lying between you and Prospect Terrace Board School. No doubt the aspect of these rooms varies with the character of the occupants. But even at their best, how cramped they are, how lacking in space, air, beauty, judged by those standards which a richer class applies to its own dwellings as a matter of course ! and though we may hope that a reforming legislation may yet do something for the dwellings of the London working-class in the essential matters of air and sanitation, it is not easy to foresee a time when the workman's house shall do more than supply him with the simplest necessaries—with shelter, with breathing-room, sleeping-room, food-room. Yet, as we fully realize, the self-respecting and industrious artisan has instincts towards the beauties and dignities of life. He likes spacious rooms, and soft colour, and pictures to look at, as much as anyone else ; he wants society, art, music, a quiet chair after hard work, stimulus for the brain after manual labour, amusement after effort, just like his

neighbour in Mayfair or Kensington. The young men and maidens want decent places other than the streets and the public-house in which to meet and dance and amuse each other. They need—as we all need—contact with higher education and gentler manners. They want —as we all ought to want—to set up a social standard independent of money or occupation, determined by manners in the best sense, by kindness, intelligence, mutual sympathy, work for the commonweal. They want surroundings for their children after school hours which, without loosening the home-tie, shall yet supplement their own narrow and much-taxed accommodation ; which shall humanize, and soften, and discipline. They want more physical exercise, more access to the country, more organization of holidays. All these things are to be had in or through the House Beautiful—through the Settlement, the ' Community ' or ' Combination ' house of the future. The Socialist dreams of attaining them through the Collectivist organization of the State. But at any rate he will admit that his goal is far, far distant ; probably he feels it more distant now than he and his fellows thought it thirty years ago. Let him, let all of us work meanwhile for something near our hands, for the deepening and extension of the Settlement movement, for the spread, that is, of knowledge of the higher pleasures, and of a true social power among the English working-class."

How instinct are these words with the idealisms of a bygone generation, a generation that knew not Communism or Proletarian Schools ! No doubt, nowadays, we have gone beyond all that ; we may not speak of the " self-respecting and industrious artisan " ; class-war is the word of power instead of class-appeasement. So far on the onward road have we travelled since 1901 !

For the rest, Mrs. Ward's main task during these early years was to use her gifts of understanding, of patience and of human sympathy in keeping all the workers at the Settlement together, in straightening out the differences that would arise among so varied a crew of energetic people, and in pushing forward the work in ever new directions. All difficulties were referred to her by Residents, by Associates, by Warden and Treasurer. On her also rested the responsi-

bility for raising the necessary money. Much helped by the Duke of Bedford, who remitted the ground-rent, and also gave a considerable subscription, she prospered beyond all rational probability in the latter task. Her many friends were touched by her infectious enthusiasm, and gladly helped her to the best of their ability, so that the deficits on each year's working turned out to be far less than the prudent had expected. Such a letter as the following was not uncommon—though the amount enclosed did not always reach so round a figure :—

May 25, 1898.

DEAR MRS. HUMPHRY WARD,—

I shall be very happy to dine with you on the 14th of June.

You once said that the P. Edwards Settlement would not be disdainful of subscriptions, and I had not anything to give at the time. I can now send you with pleasure a cheque for £100. I am sure you will find some good use for it.

Yours very truly,
NORTHBROOK.

The use found for Lord Northbrook's gift was in tidying and beautifying the garden at the back of the Settlement—a piece of land, shaded by fine old plane trees, which the Duke kept in his own hands, but allowed the Settlement to use for a nominal fee. It was now laid down in grass, and became a vital element in the carrying out of Mrs. Ward's further schemes for the welfare of her London children. It was there that she opened her first " Vacation School " in 1902 for children left to play and quarrel in the streets during the August holiday, and there too that she could see health returning to the faces of her cripples, after the opening of the " Invalid Children's School " in February, 1899.

In looking back over the origin of Mrs. Ward's interest in crippled and invalid children, the vision of our old house in Russell Square rises once more before me, with its gravelled garden at the rear running back to meet the Queen Square gardens to the east of us, for there, across those old plane-shaded spaces, rose the modest buildings of the " Alexandra

Hospital for Diseases of the Hip "—or, as we used to call it for short, the "Hip Hospital." What "Diseases of the Hip" exactly were was an obscure point to our childish minds, but we knew that our mother cared very much for the children lying there, that all our old toys went to amuse them, and that sometimes a lame boy or girl would appear at the cottage down the lane past Borough Farm, which was Mrs. Ward's earliest attempt at a convalescent home for ailing Londoners. No doubt many another Bloomsbury family did just as much as we for these helpless little ones, but the sight of them kindled in her the spark of imagination, of creative force or what you will, that would not accept their condition passively, but after many years forged from time and circumstance the opportunity for a fundamental improvement of their lives.

The opportunity presented itself in the tempting emptiness of the Settlement rooms during the day-time. From five o'clock onwards they were used to the uttermost, but all the morning and early afternoon they stood tenantless, asking for occupation. Mrs. Ward had heard of a little class for crippled children carried on at the Women's University Settlement, Southwark, by Miss Sparkes, and of another in Stepney organized by Mr. and Mrs. G. T. Pilcher, and before the new Settlement was a year old she was already making inquiries from her friends on the London School Board as to whether it might be possible to obtain the Board's assistance in opening a small school for Crippled Children at the Passmore Edwards Settlement. Already London possessed a few Special Schools for the "mentally defective"; the Progressive party was in the ascendant on the School Board, and among its chiefs were certain old friends of Mrs. Ward's—Mr. Lyulph Stanley (now Lord Sheffield) and Mr. Graham Wallas, who knew something of her powers and of the probability that anything to which she set her hand in earnest would be carried through. Mrs. Ward on her side believed that the number of crippled but educable children scattered through London was far greater than anyone supposed, and moreover that the policy of drafting them into the new schools for the mentally defective (as was being done in some cases) was fundamentally unsound. In the summer of 1898, therefore, she formed a sub-committee of the Settlement Council, which undertook

to carry out a thorough inquiry in the neighbourhood of Tavistock Place into the numbers of invalid children living at home and not attending ordinary school, whose infirmities would yet permit them to attend a special centre of the type that she had in mind. The help of all the neighbouring hospitals was asked for and most ungrudgingly given, in the supplying of lists of suitable children, while the Invalid Children's Aid Association actively helped in the work of visiting, and the School Board directed their Attendance Officers to assist Mrs. Ward by providing the names of children exempted on the ground of ill-health from attending school. Sad indeed were the secrets revealed by this inquiry—of helpless children left at home all day, perhaps with a little food within reach, while mother and father were out at work, with *nothing on earth to do*, and only the irregular and occasional visits of some kind-hearted neighbour to look forward to.

"I have a vivid recollection," writes one of the most devoted workers of the I.C.A.A., Mrs. Townsend, "of being asked by a neighbour to visit two small boys in a particularly dirty and unsavoury street. I found the door open, felt my way along a pitch-dark passage, and found at the end of it a small dark room, very barely furnished: in one corner was a bed, on which lay a boy of ten with spinal trouble; in the other corner were two kitchen chairs, on one of which sat a boy of seven, with hip disease, his leg propped on the other. Between them stood a small table, and on it a tumbler of water and a plate with slices of bread and jam. The mother of these two was at work all day: at 6 a.m. she put their food for the day on the table and went off, leaving them all alone until she got home from work dead tired at 8 p.m. At least there were two of them, which made it a little less dreary for them than for another spinal case in the next street, who was left in the same way and was dependent on a kindly but very busy neighbour for any sight of human beings for fourteen hours of each day. I could quote case after case of these types—the children untaught and undisciplined, without hope or prospect in life, sometimes neglected because mother's whole time was spent in trying to earn enough to support them, more often spoilt and petted just because they were cripples, with their disability continually before them, and made the excuse for

averting all the ordinary troubles of life. The attempts to place such children when they grew up were despairing—they were unused to using their hands and brains, unused to looking after themselves, supremely conscious that they were different from other people. The days before Special Schools seem almost too bad to look back upon even!"

From the reports on such cases which Mrs. Ward received from her helpers throughout the summer of 1898 she formed the opinion that no school could be successful unless it maintained a nurse to look after the children's ailments, and an ambulance to convey them to and from their homes. But she felt confident of being able to raise the money (£200–£220 a year) for these purposes, if the School Board would provide furniture and pay a teacher. Accordingly, by October, 1898, her committee forwarded to the School Board a carefully-sifted schedule of twenty-five names, together with a formal application that the Board should take up the proposed class, provide it with a teacher, and supply suitable furniture for the class-rooms, while the Settlement undertook to provide rooms free of charge, to pay a nurse-superintendent, and to maintain a special ambulance for the use of the school. Some correspondence followed with the School Management Committee, of which Mr. Graham Wallas was Chairman, and which was besieged at the same time by those who thought such schools totally unnecessary, since all invalid children whom it was possible to educate at all could attend the Infants' (i.e. ground floor) departments of ordinary schools, where the teachers would look after them. But Mrs. Ward collected much evidence to show that this course could not possibly be pursued with any but the slighter cases. "We have heard very pitiful things of the risks run by these spinal and hip-disease cases in the ordinary schools," she wrote to Mr. Stanley, "and of such children's terror of the hustling and bustling of the playgrounds," and early in December she summed up the arguments on this head in another memorandum to the Board. The atmosphere was favourable, and indeed Mrs. Ward had marshalled her evidence and put the case for the school so convincingly that no serious opposition was possible. The School Board gave its consent early in January, 1899; the approval of the Board of Education followed promptly, and nothing remained but to provide

the ambulance, and the set of special furniture which was to fill the two rooms set aside for the children at the Settlement.

The ambulance was presented by no less a well-wisher than Sir Thomas Barlow, the great physician, while Mrs. Burgwin, the Board's Superintendent of Special Schools, and Miss McKee, a member of the Board, busied themselves in procuring and ordering a set of ingenious invalid furniture— little cane arm-chairs with sliding foot-rests, couches for the spinal cases, a go-cart for the play-ground, and so forth—such as no Public Education Authority had ever occupied itself with before. Preparations were made at the Settlement for serving the daily dinner, which was to be an integral part of the arrangements, and which, in those happy days, was to cost the children no more than three-halfpence a head. At last, on February 28, 1899, all was ready—save indeed the ambulance, for which an omnibus with an improvised couch had to be substituted during the first few weeks. The nurse, too, had been taken ill, so that on this first day the children were fetched and safely delivered at the Settlement by Mrs. Ward's secretary, Miss Churcher. It was pitiful to see their excitement and delight at the new adventure, their joy in the "ride" and their wonder at the pretty, unfamiliar rooms, each with its open fire, its flowers from Stocks, and its set of Caldecott pictures on the walls, which greeted them at the end of their journey. Mrs. Ward was, of course, among the small group of those who welcomed them. Two medical officers from the Board were there to admit them officially, and after this ceremony they were handed over to the care of Miss Milligan, their teacher—a woman whose special gifts in the handling of these delicate children were to be devoted to the service of this school for nearly twenty years. It is to be feared that little in the way of direct instruction was imparted to them on that first day. But there they now were, safe within the benevolent shelter of that most human of institutions, the London School Board, and in a fair way to become— though few of us realized it fully then—useful members of a community from which they had received little till then but capricious petting or heart-rending neglect.

The arrangements for the children's dinners and for the hour of play-time afterwards were a subject of constant

interest and delight to Mrs. Ward. The housekeeper at the Settlement put all her ingenuity into making the children's pence go as far as they could possibly be stretched in covering the cost of a wholesome meal, and for a long time the sum of 3*s.* 6*d.* a day was sufficient to pay for dinners of meat, potatoes and pudding for twenty-five to thirty children. Their health visibly improved, and the gratitude of their parents was touching to see and hear. Nevertheless, Mrs. Ward was not satisfied. Some of the children were very capricious in their appetites, and although most of them did learn to eat milk puddings (at least when washed down with treacle !), there were some who could hardly manage the plain wholesome food, and others who could have eaten more than we had to give. It was tempting to try the experiment of a larger and more varied dietary upon them, and in days when the C.O.S. still reigned supreme, and the policy of "free meals for necessitous children" was hardly breathed by the most advanced, Mrs. Ward had the courage to carry it out. She described the results in a letter to *The Times*, in September, 1901 :

> "It was pointed out to the managers that a more liberal and varied dietary might have marked effects upon the children's health. The experiment was tried. More hot meat, more eggs, milk, cream, vegetables and fruit were given. In consequence the children's appetites largely increased, and the expenses naturally increased with them. The children's pence in May amounted to £3 13*s.* 6*d.*, and the cost of food was £4 7*s.* 2*d.* ; in June, after the more liberal scale had been adopted, the children's payments were still £3 13*s.* 10*d.*, but the expenses had risen to £5 7*s.* 8*d.* Meanwhile, the physical and mental results of the increased expenditure are already unmistakable. Partially paralysed children have been recovering strength in hands and limbs with greater rapidity than before. A child who last year often could not walk at all, from rickets and extreme delicacy, and seemed to be fading away—who in May was still languid and feeble—is now racing about in the garden on his crutches ; a boy who last year could only crawl on hands and feet is now steadily and rapidly learning to walk, and so on. The effect, indeed, is startling to those who have watched the experiment. Meanwhile the teachers have entered

in the log-book of the school their testimony to the increased power of work that the children have been showing since the new feeding has been adopted. Hardly any child now wants to lie down during school time, whereas applications to lie down used to be common; and the children both learn and remember better."

It may be added that while the minimum payment of 1½*d.* for these dinners was still maintained at the Settlement School, payments of 2*d.* and even 3*d.* were asked from those who could afford it, and were in many cases willingly given, while there were always a few children who were excused all payment on the ground of poverty at home.

Another element that contributed largely to the success of the school from the very beginning was that of the "dinner-hour helpers"—a panel of ladies who took it in turns to wait on the children at dinner and to superintend their play-time afterwards. They came with remarkable regularity, and became deeply attached, many of them, to their frail little charges. When the School Board extended the Cripples' Schools to other parts of London they were careful to copy this development of ours, by insisting that local committees of managers, half of whom should be women, must be attached to each school. Here, surely, in this simple but effective institution, may be seen the germ of the Care Committee of future days!

The success of the school in Tavistock Place—the roll of which soon increased to some forty children—naturally attracted a good deal of attention, and it had hardly been running a year before the pros and cons of setting up similar schools in other districts began to be debated within the London School Board. Some members inevitably shied at the prospect of the increasing expense to the rates, especially if the whole cost of premises, ambulance and nurse were to be borne by the public authority, and a definite movement arose, either for bringing the crippled children into the ordinary schools, with some provision in the way of special couches, etc., or for brigading the crippled and invalid children with the "Mentally Defectives" in the special centres which had already been opened for the latter. Much encouragement was given to this latter view by the official report of one of the Medical Officers of the School Board, who was instructed, in the spring of 1900, to examine

and report upon all cases of crippled children not attending school, and submitted a report recommending that "those cases whom it is advisable to permit to attend school at all" should be sent to the Mentally Defective Centres, while neither nurse nor ambulance were, in the opinion of the writer, required.

Mrs. Ward and her friends on the School Board were obliged to fight very strenuously against these views, which, if they had prevailed, would have prevented the establishment of "Physically Defective Centres" as we know them to-day. It is perhaps unprofitable to go into the details of that long-past controversy, the echoes of which have so completely died away; suffice it to say that a Special Conference appointed by the Board to consider the Medical Officer's Report recommended, in October, 1900, that "The Board do make provision for children who, by reason of physical defect, are incapable of receiving proper benefit from the instruction in the ordinary public elementary schools, but are not incapable by reason of such defect of receiving benefit from instruction in special classes or schools"; and "that children of normal intelligence be not taught with mentally defective children." A little later it recommended the provision of both ambulance and nurse. These resolutions—which were accepted by the Board—cleared the way for the establishment of new centres for "Physically Defective" children, as they now began to be called; but in order to make her case invincible, and to accelerate the work of the School Board, Mrs. Ward undertook, all through the autumn and winter of 1900–1901, a complete investigation into the numbers and condition of the invalid children not attending school in some of the largest and poorest London boroughs. In consultation with the trained workers whom she employed for the purpose, she had special forms printed for use in the inquiry, and I remember well her eager comments as the statistics came in, and her consternation at the ever-increasing numbers of crippled children which the inquiry revealed. Finally this investigation extended to nine out of the ten School Board divisions of London, and embraced a total of some 1,800 children, of whom 1,000, in round numbers, were recommended by her as suitable for invalid schools. Of the rest, a substantial proportion were reported as fit for

ordinary school with a little additional care on the part of teachers and managers; some were too ill for any school, and some were both mentally and physically defective, and therefore recommended for the "M.D." Centres. Meanwhile, the Special Schools Sub-Committee of the School Board, under their Chairman, the Hon. Maude Lawrence, had been at work since February, 1901, in making inquiries into possible sites and buildings for the new schools, and by the middle of March the Board were able to inform Mrs. Ward that sites for four Centres had been agreed upon, while two more were to be located in Kennington and Battersea "on the constitution of your returns, which have now been marked on the map by the Divisional Superintendents."

Four ambulances had also been ordered, and it was decided to appoint nurses at each of the Centres at a salary of £75 a year. Kitchens were, of course, to be provided at all the Centres, so that the hot midday meal which had proved so successful at the Settlement might be supplied.

The first two Centres to be opened by the School Board—in Paddington and Bethnal Green—were ready by September, 1901, and both drew their children entirely from those on Mrs. Ward's lists. It may be imagined with what intense satisfaction she had followed every step taken by the School Board towards this consummation. Finally she gathered up the whole story of the Settlement School and of the School Board's adoption of responsibility for London's crippled children in the letter to *The Times* mentioned above, pleading for the extension of the movement to other large towns, and describing certain efforts made at the Settlement School for the industrial and artistic training of the older children. Her final paragraph ran as follows:

> "The happiness of the new schools is one of their most delightful characteristics. Freed from the dread of being jostled on stairs or knocked down in the crowd of the playground, with hours, food and rest proportioned to their need, these maimed and fragile creatures begin to expand and unfold like leaves in the sun. And small wonder! They have either been battling with ordinary school on terribly unequal terms, or else, in the intervals of hospital and convalescent treatment, their not uncommon lot has been to be locked up at home alone, while the normal members of the family were at work. I can recall one

case of a child, lame and constantly falling, with brain irritation to boot—the result of infant convulsions—locked up for hours alone while its mother was at work; and another, of a poor little lad, whose back had been injured by an accident, alone all day after his discharge from hospital, feebly dragging himself about his room, in cold weather, to find a few sticks for fire, with the tears running down his cheeks from pain. His father and sister were at work, and he had no mother. It could not be helped. But he has been gathered into one of the new schools, where he has become another being. Scores of children in as sore need as his will, I hope, be reached and comforted by this latest undertaking of the Board.

"And for some, all we shall be able to do, perhaps, will be to gladden a few months or years before the little life goes out. From them there will be no economic return, such as we may hope for in the great majority of cases. But even so, will it not be worth while?"

As the efforts of the School Board and—after 1903—of the Education Committee of the London County Council to spread the "Special Schools for Physically Defective Children" over London grew more and more effective, and the number of the new schools rose steadily, Mrs. Ward and her principal helpers concentrated their attention mainly upon the training of the children for suitable employment on their leaving school. As early as 1900 a little committee was formed for this purpose at the Settlement, which engaged special teachers of drawing and design for the boys and of art needlework for the girls—for these delicate children were often found to possess artistic aptitudes which made up to them in a certain degree for their other disabilities. Presently this committee developed into the "Crippled Children's Training and Dinner Society," presided over by Miss Maude Lawrence, of the London School Board, a Committee which did hard pioneer work in the organizing of careers for these crippled children, whose numbers stood revealed beyond all expectation as the Special Schools spread to every quarter of London. By the year 1906 the numbers of schools had risen to twenty-three, and of children on the rolls to 1,767; by 1909 the figures were thirty and 2,452 respectively. The dark-brown ambulances conveying their happy load of children to and from the schools became

a familiar sight of the London streets. But, though Mrs. Ward's experiment had grown in these ten years with such astonishing rapidity, it had not lost its original character. She had impressed it too deeply with her own broad and sane humanity for the Special Schools Department of the L.C.C. to become lost in red tape or officialdom, and under the wise reign of Mrs. Burgwin and Miss Collard (Superintendents of Special Schools under the Council) the traditions that had gathered round the first Invalid Children's School were carried on and perpetuated. And to this day the Boards of Managers that watch over the " P.D." Schools seem to be inspired by a tenderer and more personal feeling than any other of the multifarious committees that take thought for the children of the State. The secret, in fact, of Mrs. Ward's success in this as in her other public undertakings lay in the fact that her action was founded on a real and urgent human need, and that she combined a power of presenting and urging that need in forcible manner with an unfailing tenderness for the individual child. As one of her colleagues expressed it once in homely phrase: " The fact is, she had the brain of a man and the heart of a woman." Nor did the heart dissolve itself in " gush," but showed its quality rather in a disinterestedness that cared not where the *hudos* went, so long as the thing itself were done—in an eager desire to bring others forward and to give them a full share of whatever credit were to be had.

The view of the School Board authorities was summed up long afterwards in these sentences from the pen of Mr. Graham Wallas : " She brought to the task not only imagination and sympathy, but a steady and systematic industry, which is the most valuable of all qualities in public life. She was never disheartened, and never procrastinated."

What was felt of her spirit by those who worked with her more intimately, who saw her week by week in contact with the children themselves, is harder to put into words. Perhaps this little vision of her, recorded by the teacher of the school, Miss Milligan, comes nearest to saving what is, after all, an intangible essence, that once had form and being and is now vanished into air :

" But above and beyond all else Mrs. Ward was—what she was always called amongst us—' The Fairy Godmother.' In the early days before the school grew so big,

every child knew this Fairy Godmother personally, and loved her, and we remember how on the occasion of one Christmas Party Mrs. Ward was unable to be present through illness, and the children were so sad that even the Christmas tree could hardly console them. When she had recovered and came again to see them, *they* gave *her* a delightful little tea-party, even the poorest children giving half-pence and farthings to buy a bunch of Parma violets, and a sponge-cake—having first ascertained what sort of cake she liked. It was a pretty sight to see them all clustering round her, and her kind, beautiful face whenever she was amongst the children will haunt one for years."

CHAPTER VIII

HELBECK OF BANNISDALE — CATHOLICS AND UNITARIANS — *ELEANOR* AND THE VILLA BARBERINI

1896–1900

HELBECK OF BANNISDALE is probably that one among Mrs. Ward's books on which her fame as a novelist will stand or fall. Though it sold less in England and much less in America than her previous novels at the time of its publication, it has outlasted all the others in the extent of its circulation to-day. In this the opinion of those critics for whose word she cared has been borne out, for they prophesied that it had in it, more than her other books, the element of permanence. "I know not another book that shows the classic fate so distinctly to view," wrote George Meredith, and some years later, in a long talk with a younger friend about Mrs. Ward's work, repeated his profound admiration for *Helbeck*. "The hero, if hero he be, is as fresh a creation as Ravenswood or Rochester," said another critic, Lord Crewe, "and what a luxury it is to hang a new portrait on one's walls in this age of old figures in patched garments! I have no idea yet how the story will end, but though the atmosphere is so much less lurid and troubled, I have something of the *Wuthering Heights* sense of coming disaster. I think the Brontës would have given your story the most valuable admiration of all—that of writers who have succeeded in a rather similar, though by no means the same, field."

The theme of the book was, as all Mrs. Ward's readers know, the eternal clash between the mediæval and the modern mind in the persons of Alan Helbeck, the Catholic squire, and Laura Fountain, the child of science and negation; while beyond and behind their tragic loves

stands the "army of unalterable law" in the austere northern hills, the bog-lands of the estuary, the river in gentleness and flood. Almost, indeed, can it be said that there are but three characters in *Helbeck*—Alan himself, Laura, and the river, which in the end takes her tormented spirit. The idea of such a novel had presented itself to Mrs. Ward during a visit that she paid in the autumn of 1896 to her old friends, Mr. James Cropper and his daughter, in that beautiful South Westmorland country which she had known only less well than the Lake District itself ever since her childhood. There the talk turned one day on the fortunes of an old Catholic family (the Stricklands), who had owned Sizergh Castle, near Sedgwick, for more than three centuries, steadfastly enduring the persecutions of earlier days, and, now that persecutions had ceased, fighting a sad and losing battle against poverty and mortgages. "The vision of the old squire and the old house—of all the long vicissitudes of obscure suffering, and dumb clinging to the faith, of obstinate, half-conscious resistance to a modern world, that in the end had stripped them of all their gear and possessions, save only this 'I will not' of the soul—haunted me when the conversation was done."[1] By the end of the long railway-journey from Kendal to London next day she had thought out her story. The deepest experiences of her own life went to the making of it, for had she not been brought up with a Catholic father, made aware from her earliest childhood of the irremediable chasm there between two lovers? The situation in *Helbeck* was of course wholly different, but in the working out of it Mrs. Ward had the advantage of a certain inborn familiarity with the Catholic mind, which made the characters of this book peculiarly her own.

All through the winter of 1896–7 Mrs. Ward was steeping herself in Catholic literature; then in the early spring—again by the good offices of Mr. Cropper—she became aware that Levens Hall, the wonderful old Tudor house near the mouth of the Kent, which belonged to Capt. Josceline Bagot, might be had for a few weeks or months. She determined to migrate thither as soon as possible and to write her story amid the

[1] Introduction to *Helbeck of Bannisdale*, Autograph Edition, Houghton Mifflin & Co.

very scenes which she had planned for it. How well do I remember the grey spring evening (it was the 6th of March) on which—after delays and confusions far beyond our small deserts—we drove up to the river front of the old house; the hurried rush through glorious dark rooms, and a half timid exploration of the garden, peopled with gaunt shapes of clipped and tortured yews. Levens was to us just such another adventure as Hampden House had been, eight years before, but this time there was no bareness, no dilapidation, nothing but the ripe product of many centuries of peaceful care. Yet Levens was famous for its crooked descent, its curse and its "grey lady"—an accessory, this latter, of sadly modern origin, as we found on inquiring into her local history. Mrs. Ward, however, wove her skilfully into her story, as she wove the fell-farm of the family of "statesmen" to whom Miss Cropper introduced her, or the mournful peat-bogs of the estuary, or the daffodils crowding up through the undergrowth in Brigsteer Wood, or covering with sheets of gold the graves round Cartmel Fell Chapel.

Yet Bannisdale itself is "a house of dream," as Mrs. Ward herself described it [1]; neither wholly Levens nor wholly Sizergh, placed somewhere in the recesses of Levens Park, and looking south over the Kent. "And just as Bannisdale, in my eyes, is no mortal house, and if I were to draw it, it would have outlines and features all its own, so the story of the race inhabiting it, and of Helbeck its master, detached itself wholly from that of any real person or persons, past or present. Those who know Levens will recognize many a fragment here and there that has been worked into Bannisdale: and so with Sizergh. But Helbeck's house, as it stands in the book, is his and his alone. And in the same way the details and vicissitudes of the Helbeck ancestry, and the influences that went to build up Helbeck himself, were drawn from many fields, then passed through the crucible of composition, and scarcely anything now remains of those original facts from which the book sprang."

Many Catholic books, in which she browsed "with what thoughts," as Carlyle would say, followed her to Levens, giving her that grip of detail in matters of belief or ritual,

[1] Introduction to the Autograph Edition.

without which she could not have approached her subject, but which she had now learnt to absorb and re-fashion far more skilfully than in the days of *Robert Elsmere*. She loved to discuss these matters with her father, from whom she had no secrets, in spite of their divergencies of view; when he came to visit us at Levens—still a tall and beautiful figure, in spite of his seventy-three years—they talked of them endlessly, and when he returned to Dublin she wrote him such letters as the following:

"One of the main impressions of this Catholic literature upon me is to make me perceive the enormous intellectual pre-eminence of Newman. Another impression—I know you will forgive me for saying quite frankly what I feel—has been to fill me with a perfect horror of asceticism, or rather of the austerities—or most of them—which are indispensable to the Catholic ideal of a saint. We must talk this over, for of course I realize that there is much to be said on the other side. But the simple and rigid living which I have seen, for various ideal purposes, in friends of my own—like T. H. Green—seems to me both religious and reasonable, while I cannot for the life of me see anything in the austerities, say of the Blessed Mary Alacoque, but hysteria and self-murder. The Divine Power occupies itself for age on age in the development of all the fine nerve-processes of the body, with their infinite potencies for good or evil. And instead of using them for good, the Catholic mystic destroys them, injures her digestion and her brain, and is then tortured by terrible diseases which she attributes to every cause but the true one—her own deliberate act—and for which her companions glorify her, instead of regarding them as what—surely—they truly are, God's punishment. No doubt directors are more careful nowadays than they were in the seventeenth century, but her life is still published by authority, and the ideal it contains is held up to young nuns.

"Don't imagine, dearest, that I find myself in antagonism to all this literature. The truth in many respects is quite the other way. The deep personal piety of good Catholics, and the extent to which their religion enters into their lives, are extraordinarily attractive. How much we, who are outside, have to learn from them!"

To an ex-Catholic friend, Mr. Addis, who had undertaken

to look over the manuscript for her, she wrote some time later, when the book was nearly finished:

"In my root-idea of him, Helbeck was to represent the old Catholic crossed with that more mystical and enthusiastic spirit, brought in by such converts as Ward and Faber, under Roman and Italian influence. I gather, both from books and experience, that the more fervent ideas and practices, which the old Catholics of the 'forties disliked, have, as a matter of fact, obtained a large ascendancy in the present practice of Catholics, just as Ritualism has forced the hands of the older High Churchmen. And I thought one might, in the matter of austerities, conceive a man directly influenced by the daily reading of the Lives of the Saints, and obtaining in middle life, after probation and under special circumstances, as it were, leave to follow his inclinations.

"I take note most gratefully of all your small corrections. What I am really anxious about now is the points —in addition to pure jealous misery—on which Laura's final breach with Helbeck would turn. I *think* on the terror of confession—on what would seem to her the inevitable uncovering of the inner life and yielding of personality that the Catholic system involves—and on the foreignness of the whole idea of *sin*, with its relative, penance. But I find it extremely hard to work out!"

As the weeks of our stay at Levens passed by, while the sea-trout came up the Kent and challenged the barbarian members of the family to many a tussle in the Otter-pool, or the "turn-hole," or the bend of the river just above the bridge, Mrs. Ward plunged ever deeper into her subject, though the difficulties under which she laboured in the sheer writing of her chapters were almost more disabling than ever. "For a week my arm has been almost useless, alas!" she wrote in May; "I have had it in a sling and bandaged up. I partly strained it in rubbing A., but I must also have caught cold in it. Anyhow it has been very painful, and I have been in quite low spirits, looking at Chapter III, which would not move! The chairs and tables here don't suit it at all—the weather is extremely cold—and altogether I believe I am pining for Stocks!" But before we left the wonderful old house many friends had come to stay with us there, renewing their own tired spirits in its beauty and

charm, and in the society of its temporary mistress. Henry James and the Henry Butchers, Katharine Lyttelton and her Colonel, Bron Herbert and Victor Lytton, fishers of sea-trout,—and, on Easter Monday, "Max Creighton" himself, now Bishop of London, much worn by the antics of Mr. Kensit and his friends, but otherwise only asking to "eat the long miles" in walks along Scout Scar, or over the "seven bens and seven fens" that lay between us and the lovely little Chapel of St. Anthony on Cartmel Fell. Such talks as they had, he and Mrs. Ward, at all times when she was not deliberately burying herself in her study to escape the temptation! The rest of us would listen fascinated, watching for that gesture of his, when he would throw back his head so that the under side of his red beard appeared to view—a gesture of triumph over his opponent, as he fondly thought, until her next remark showed him there was still much to win. Henry James was more demure in his tastes, walking beside the pony-tub when Mrs. Ward went for her afternoon drive through Levens Park, or along the Brigsteer lane, and "letting fall words of wisdom as we went" (for so it is recorded by the driver of the tub). Ah, if those words could but have been gathered up and saved from all-swallowing oblivion! Mr. James's friendship for Mrs. Ward had already endured for ten or twelve years before this visit to Levens, but these days in the old house gave it a deeper and more intimate tone, which it never lost thence-forward. He never wholly approved of her art as a novelist —how could he, when it differed so fundamentally from his own?—but his admiration for her as a woman, his affection for her as a friend, knew very few limits indeed. And her feeling for him was to grow and deepen through another twenty years of happy friendship, ripening towards that day when, in England's darkest time, he chose to make himself a son of England, and then, soon afterwards, followed the many lads whom he had loved "where track there is none."

Mrs. Ward finally quitted Levens before the end of her lease, owing to a prolonged attack of influenza, which spoilt her last weeks there, but she always looked back to her stay in the "Border Castle," as Mr. James had dubbed it, as an enchanting episode, taking her back to the fell-country and its people with an intimacy she had not known since those long-past childish days, when she would dance up the path



MRS. WARD IN 1898

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY MISS ETHEL ARNOLD

to Sweden Bridge, the grown-ups loitering behind. For the remainder of this year (1897) she was pressing on with her book, in spite of ever-recurring waves of ill-health and of constant over-pressure with the affairs of the Settlement. By the autumn, when the new buildings were actually open, this pressure became so formidable that she was obliged to take a small house at Brighton for three months, in order to spend three days of each week there in complete seclusion. The book prospered fairly well, but the formal opening of the Settlement, which had been fixed for February 12, 1898, was very much on her mind—at least until she had succeeded in persuading Mr. Morley to make the principal speech. This, however, he consented to do with all the graciousness inspired by his old friendship for its founder; and when the ceremony was actually over Mrs. Ward retired to Stocks for a final struggle with the last chapters of *Helbeck*. "Except, perhaps, in the case of "Bessie Costrell," she wrote in her *Recollections*, "I was never more possessed by a subject, more shut in by it from the outer world." And in these last few weeks of the long effort she walked as in a dream, though the dream was too often broken by cruel attacks of her old illness. She fought them down, however, and emerged victorious on March 25,—more dead than alive, in the rueful opinion of her family. But the usual remedy of a flight to Italy was tried again with sovereign effect, and at Cadenabbia on Lake Como, in Florence and on Maggiore, she felt the flooding back of a sense of physical ease. The book did not appear until the month of June, when both Press and friends received it with so warm an enthusiasm as to "produce in me that curious mood, which for the artist is much nearer dread than boasting—dread that the best is over, and that one will never earn such sympathy again." One discordant note was, however, struck by a review in the *Nineteenth Century* by a certain Father Clarke, violently attacking *Helbeck* as a caricature of Catholicism, and picking various small holes in its technicalities of Catholic practice. The article was answered in the next number of the *Nineteenth Century* by another Catholic, Mr. St. George Mivart, and Mrs. Ward's fairness to Catholicism vindicated; indeed, many of the other reviews had accused her of making the ancient faith too attractive in the person of Helbeck. Mr. C. E. Maurice

wrote to her to protest against Father Clarke's attack, remarking incidentally that "if any religious body have cause of complaint against you for this book, it is the Protestant Nonconformists" and asking her in the course of his letter "what point you generally start from in deciding to write a novel; whether from the wish to work out a special thesis, or from the desire to deal with certain characters who have interested you, or from being impressed by a special *story*, actual or possible?" Mrs. Ward replied to him as follows:

"I think a novel with me generally springs from the idea of a situation involving two or three characters. *Helbeck* arose from a fragment of conversation heard in the North, and was purely human and not controversial in its origin. It is in these conflicts between old and new, as it has always seemed to me, that we moderns find our best example of compelling fate,—and the weakness of the personal life in the grip of great forces that regard it not, or seem to regard it not, is just as attractive as ever it was to the imagination—do you not think so? The forms are different, the subject is the same."

To Mr. Mivart himself she wrote:

"I hear with great interest from Mr. Knowles that you are going to break a lance with Father Clarke on poor *Helbeck's* behalf in the forthcoming *Nineteenth Century*. I need not say that I shall read very diligently what you have to say. Meanwhile I am venturing to send you these few Catholic reviews, as specimens of the very different feelings that seem to have been awakened in many quarters from those expressed by Father Clarke. It amuses me to put the passages from Father Vaughan's sermon that concern Helbeck himself side by side with Father Clarke's onslaught upon him.

"The story that the orphan tells to Laura, which Father Clarke calls 'detestable, extravagant and objectionable,' that no instructed Catholic would dream of telling to his juniors, is told by Father Law, S.J., to his younger brothers and sisters, and is given in the very interesting *Life of Father Law*, by Ellis Schreiber. I have only shortened it.

"Father Clarke does not seem to have the dimmest notion of what is meant by writing in character. I had

a hearty laugh over his really absurd remarks about Laura and St. Francis Borgia's children."

Some years later, when her feeling about the book's reception had settled down and crystallized, she wrote in more meditative mood to her son-in-law, George Trevelyan :

" Yes, it was a good subject, and I shall hardly come across one again so full both of intellectual and human interest. . . . I like your ' dear and dreadful ! ' In my case it is quite true. Catholicism has an enormous attraction for me,—yet I could no more be a Catholic than a Mahometan. Only, never let us forget how much of Catholicism is based, as Uncle Matt would have said, on ' Natural truth '—truth of human nature, and truth of moral experience. The visible, imperishable Society—the Kingdom of Heaven in our midst—no greater idea, it seems to me, was ever thrown into the world of men. Its counterpart is to be found in the Logos conception from which all Liberalism descends, and which is the perpetual corrective of the Catholic idea. But these things would take us far ! "

Meanwhile, to Bishop Creighton, who had written to her far less critically than usual of her new book, she replied with a long letter, in which, after the first sheet, she reverted to the subjects which were always of the deepest interest to this pair of friends—the barriers set around the National Church, which Mrs. Ward complained kept out too many of the faithful, or at least too many of those who, like herself, would willingly proclaim their faith in a spiritual Christ.

STOCKS, TRING,
August 9, 1898.

. . . " I have been desperately, perhaps disproportionately interested in a meeting of Liberal Churchmen as to which I cannot get full particulars—in which the great need of the day was said to be not ritual, but ' the re-statement and re-interpretation of dogma in the light of the knowledge and criticism of our day.' It makes me once more conscious of all sorts of claims and cravings that I have often wished to talk over with you—not as Bishop of London !—but as one with whom, in old days

at any rate, I used to talk quite freely. If only the orthodox churchmen would allow us on our side a little more freedom, I, at any rate, should be well content to let the Ritualists do what they please! Every year I live I more and more resent the injustice which excludes those who hold certain historical and critical opinions from full membership in the National Church, above all from participation in the Lord's Supper. Why are we *all* always to be bound by the formularies of a past age, which avowedly represent a certain state of past opinion, a certain balance of parties?—privately and personally I mean. The public and ceremonial use of formularies is another matter where clearly the will of the majority should decide. The minority may be well content to accept the public and ceremonial use, if it may accept it in its own way. But here the Church steps in with a test —several tests—the Catechism, the Creed, the Confirmation service. And the tendency of the last generation of churchpeople has been all towards tightening these tests, probably under two influences—a deepened Christian devotion, and the growing pressure of the alternative view of Christianity. But is it not time the alternative view were brought in and assimilated,—to the strengthening of Christian love and fellowship? What *ought* to prevent anyone who accepts the Lord's own test of the 'two great commandments,' or the Pauline test of 'all who love the Lord Jesus Christ,' from breaking the bread and drinking the wine which signify the headship and sacrifice, and mystical fellowship of Christ? But such an one may hold it solemnly and sacredly impossible to recite matters of supposed history such as 'born of the Virgin Mary,' or 'on the third day He rose again—and ascended to the Father,' as personally true of himself. He may be quite wrong—that is not the point. Supposing that his historical conscience is clearly and steadily convinced on the one side, and on the other he only asks that he and his children may pass into the national Christian family, and join hands with all who believe in God, who 'love the Lord Jesus' and hope in immortality, what should keep him out? Would it not be an immense strengthening of the Church to include, on open and honourable terms, those who can now only share in her Eucharist

on terms of concealment and evasion? Why should there not be an alternative baptismal and confirmation service, to be claimed under a conscience clause by those who desire it? At present no one can have his children confirmed who is not prepared to accept, or see them accept, certain historical statements, which he and they may perhaps not believe. And except as a matter of private bargain and sufferance—always liable to scandal—neither he nor they, unless these tests have been passed, can join in the commemoration of their Master's death, which should be to them the food and stimulus of life. Nothing honestly remains to them but exclusion, and hunger—or the falling back upon a Unitarianism, which has too often unlearned Christ, and to which, at its best, they may not naturally belong."

Mrs. Ward might, perhaps, have added that what remains to the majority of those whom these tests keep out, is a gradual *loss of hunger*—a making up with other things, which cannot but be a fatal loss to the National Church. But she was thinking of her own case, and to her, I think, the "hunger" for admission to the Church (though always on her own terms!) remained for long years a living force, leading her in the end to write that best and most vivid among her later books, *The Case of Richard Meynell*. Meanwhile her relations with Unitarianism, mentioned in this letter, remained somewhat anomalous, for while agreeing with its tenets, she was always impatient of its old-fashioned isolation, and of its neglect to seize the opportunity presented to it by the march of modern thought, which seemed to her to summon it to take the lead in the movement towards a free Christian fellowship. She was never so hard on the Unitarian body as Stopford Brooke, who once exclaimed in a letter to her that "they cling to ancient uglinesses as if they were sweethearts!" But Mrs. Ward had had a brush with them in 1893, when she wrote to the *Manchester Guardian* after the opening of Manchester College, Oxford, lamenting the bareness of the service, the extempore prayers, the relics of old Puritanism, instead of the appeal to colour and imagination and modern thought. Her letter provoked many answers, both public and private, and to one of these, a kind and generous argument from

Dr. Estlin Carpenter, she replied with a fuller explanation of her feeling:

November 2, 1893.

. . . "My own feeling, the child of course of early habit and tradition, is strongly on the side of ritual throughout, though I would infinitely rather have *new* ritual, like Dr. Martineau's two services, than a modified edition of the Anglican prayers, such as we have at Mr. Brooke's. But I don't think I should have ventured to put forward the view I did so strongly as I did, with regard to any other place in the world than Oxford. I knew Oxford intimately for fifteen years, and still, of course, have many friends there. I am convinced that Manchester College has a real mission towards an Oxford which is not yet theirs, but which ought to become so. But I am also certain that Oxford cannot be reached through the forms that have been so far adopted. You may say, as Mr. —— does in effect, in a letter to me: 'Oxford must take us with our Puritanism as we are, or leave us.' But surely to say this is to refuse a real mission, a real call. It is the very opposite of St. Paul's spirit, of making himself all things to all men, 'that I may by any means gain some.' It is putting adherence to a form, about which there is, after all, serious difference of opinion in your own body, between you and a great future. At least that is how it looks to me, and I think I have some means of judging. The religious message, the thoughts, the conceptions that you have to give Oxford, especially to the young men, not of your own body, who may be attracted to you through the Chapel, are, it seems to me, the all-important thing, and any fears of imitating the Church, or dislike of abandoning Puritan tradition, which may hold you back from the best means of bringing those thoughts and faiths into the current life of Oxford, will be a disaster to us all. It is because I have thought so much about this settlement of yours, in the place where I myself often starved for lack of religious fellowship, that I was drawn to write with the vehemence I did. But one had better never be vehement!"

In the following year the Unitarians forgave her

and asked her to deliver the "Essex Hall Lecture," which she did with a brilliant and suggestive paper entitled "Unitarians and the Future." Her relations with many Unitarians all through the period of University Hall were, as we have seen, of the most intimate and friendly character, and now, after the publication of *Helbeck of Bannisdale*, she showed her goodwill to Unitarianism once more by journeying down to Norwich to give an address in aid of the famous old Octagon Chapel there. The address was typical of many others that she gave in these years of her increasing fame; carefully and even elaborately prepared beforehand—for she would never trust herself to speak extempore—it lived for long in the memory of her hearers as a model of its kind, while the outspoken opinions it expressed gave rise to a good deal of controversy in the religious Press. The demands on her time for speeches and addresses in aid of every possible good cause were by this time incessant. She refused nineteen out of twenty, but the twentieth was usually so persuasively put that she succumbed, and then she would live in an agony of apprehension and of accumulated overwork, until the effort was safely over. One of her most finished literary performances was the address she gave in Glasgow in February, 1897, on "the Peasant in Literature"; while her paper on the Transfiguration, entitled "Gospel Interpretation—a Fragment," given at the Leicester Unitarian Conference in 1900, remains to this day, with some of her audience, as a new and startling revelation of the critical methods which had, for her, thrown so vivid a light on the dark places of the Gospel story. All these carefully-prepared essays—for such, indeed, they were—added enormously to the burden of work which Mrs. Ward already carried, but she loved her audiences and loved to feel that she had pleased and interested, or even shocked them a little. "I want to poke them up," she would say sometimes, with that flash of mischief or "trotzigkeit" (the word is untranslatable), that endeared her so much to those who knew her well; and poke them up she surely did whenever the subject of her address was a religious one.

But the pace at which she lived during this year (1898), when the work of the Settlement was expanding in every direction, and the preparations for the Invalid Children's School were going on throughout the winter, led her to feel

that in order to write her next book she must have a complete change of scene and, if possible, a far more complete seclusion than that of Stocks, with its accessibility to posts and telegrams. The great subject of Catholicism still held her fascinated, but she was tempted to explore it this second time rather from the artistic than the religious point of view. She had been reading much of Châteaubriand and Mme de Beaumont during the winter, and had felt her imagination kindled by the relationship between the two; why should she not migrate to Rome and there, in the ancient scene, weave anew the old tale of the conquest of "outworn, buried age" by the forces of youth? So while the preparations for the Cripples' School were hastening forward, in February, 1899, negotiations were also going on with the owners of the vast old Villa Barberini, at Castel Gandolfo, in the Alban Hills, for the taking of its first floor, and various friends in Rome were helping us with advice as to how to make it habitable. It was just such an adventure as Mrs. Ward loved with her whole heart, and when we finally arrived at the little station overlooking the Alban Lake, on March 23, packed ourselves and our luggage into three *vetture* and drove up to the somewhat forbidding entrance of the Villa, we felt that here, indeed, was a new kingdom—a place to dream of, not to tell!

Never, indeed, will those who took part in it forget the sensations of that arrival—the floods of welcome poured upon us by the delightful little butler, Alessandro, and his stately sister Vittoria, who had been engaged to minister to our wants, our own faltering Italian, and the procession across the gloomy entrance-hall and up the uncarpeted stone staircase, to the rooms of our floor above. A dozen rooms clustering round two huge central *saloni*, all with tiled floors, exiguous strips of carpet, and wonderfully ugly wall-papers, formed our *appartamento*; but at each end, east and west, were glorious balconies, the one overlooking the Alban Lake and Monte Cavo, the other the vast sweep of the Campagna, stretching from our falling olive-gardens to the sea. Long we hung over those balconies, forgetting our unpacking, and when at last we left our book-boxes behind and wandered out into the mile-long garden, clothing the side of the hill on the Campagna side, it was only to suffer fresh thrills of wonder and delight. For there, beyond

the ilex avenue, that led like a cool green tunnel to the further mysteries, ran a great wall of *opus reticulatum*, banking up the hill on that side and crowned by overhanging olives, which had formed part of the villa built on this ridge by the Emperor Domitian, just eighteen hundred years before. And there, to the right, on another substructure of Domitian's, ran the balustraded terrace laid out by the rascally Barberini Pope, Urban VIII (or more probably by one of his still more rascally nephews), from which you beheld, rolling away to the sea, fold after fold of sad Campagna, and far away to the north, between two stone pines, the white dome of St. Peter's. Mrs. Ward thus described the scene, four days after our arrival, in a letter to her son:

"Villa Barberini,"
March 27, 1899.

"To-day, you never saw anything so enchanting in the world, as this house and its outlook. At our feet, looking west, lies the rose and green Campagna, melting into the sea on the horizon line, and as it approaches the hills, climbing towards us through all imaginable beauty of spreading olive-groves, and soaring pinewoods—brown pinkish earth, just upturned by the white ploughing oxen,—here and there on the spurs of the hills, great ruined strongholds of the Savelli and Orsini, or fragments of Roman tombs: close below the house a green sloping olive garden, white with daisies under the grey mist of the olives—while if you lean out of window and crane your neck a little, far to the north beyond the descending stone pines, the æthereal sun-steeped plain takes here a consistence in something, which is Rome.

"We have just come in from wandering along the sunny hill-side towards Albano, past ruins of the Domitian Villa, overgrown with ilex and creepers, through long shady ilex-avenues, and then out into the warmth of the olive-yards, where the cyclamen are coming out and the grass is full of white and blue and pink anemones. Such a deep draught of beauty—of *bien-être* physical and mental—one has not had for years. But only to-day! Two days ago we woke up to find a world in snow, or rather all the hills white, the Alban Lake lying like

steel in its snowy ring, and the *silvæ laborantes* under the weight. And oh! the cold of these vast bare rooms at night! We spent the day in Rome, where, of course, there was no snow and much shelter, but when we came home, we sat and shivered at dinner, and presently we all dragged the table up to the fire in hope of cheating the draughts a little. Then the north wind howled round us all night, and our spirits were low. But to-day the transformation scene is complete! . . . We have put in baths and stoves, and carpets and spring mattresses, bought some linen and electro-plate, hired some arm-chairs—and here we are, not luxurious certainly, but with a fair amount of English comfort about us—quite enough, I fear, to make the Italians stare, who think we must be mad, anyway, to come here in March, and still madder to spend any money on an apartment that we take for three months! The cook, a white-capped, white-jacketed gentleman whom I have only seen once, sends us up excellent meals—except that on one occasion he so far forgot himself as to offer us for dinner, first, pâté de foie gras, and then "movietti," which, being explained, are small birds, probably siskins. Father and I were too hungry to desist, the poor little things being anyway fried and past praying for, but J. sat by, starving and lofty. And *we* were punished by finding nothing to eat! So for many reasons, ideal and other, the cook will have to be told to keep his hands off *movietti*."

Here, then, we established ourselves, and here, either in the little *salotto* that we furnished for her, or walking up and down that marvellous terrace, Mrs. Ward thought out her tale of *Eleanor*, infusing into it strains old and new—Papal, Italian, English, American—but, above all, steeping the whole scene in her own love for the Italy of to-day, as well as for the old, the immemorial Italy.

Those were the times—how far away they seem now, and how small the troubles!—when things were not going happily for the new-made Italian Kingdom, when the country still smarted under the misery and failure of the Abyssinian campaign, and when English visitors were wont to express themselves with insular frankness on the shortcomings of the New Italy, whose squalid activities

so impudently disturbed, in their eyes, the shades of the Old. The glamour of the *Risorgimento* had somehow departed, in the forty years that followed Cavour's death, so that the Englishman travelling for his pleasure in the former territories of the Pope, was ready enough to criticize the defects of the new Government, while forgetting that if they had remained under the Pope, he would have found therein no Government, in the modern sense, at all. Many elderly people still remained who could remember Rome before *Venti Settembre*, when the Cardinals drove in state down the Corso, and Pio Nono could be seen taking his part in the processions of *Corpus Domini* or *San Giovanni*. Sentimentalists wept at the vandalisms of the Savoyards, who had built a new city, all in squares and rectangles, on the heights of the Esquiline, away from the sights and smells of Old Rome, had put up a huge " Palace of Finance " to record their yearly deficits, and were now cleaning up the Colosseum and the Forum, so that no æsthetic tourist would ever wish to set foot in them again.

Mrs. Ward heard plenty of this sort of talk from English friends, who came out to see us at the Villa, but she, by the simple process of falling in love, headlong, with Italy and the Italians, avoided these pitfalls and was enabled to see with a far truer eye than they the essential soundness of Italian life, whether in town or country—the new ever jostling the old, rudely sometimes, but with the rudeness of life and growth, and the old still influencing and encompassing all things.

" Nothing could be worse than the state of things here between Liberals and Clericals," she wrote to her son, " yet people seem to rub along and will, I believe, go on rubbing along in much the same way for many a long year. We read the *Tribuna* and the *Civiltà Cattolica*, which on opposite sides breathe fire and flame. But life goes on and insensibly certain links grow up, even between the two extremes. For instance, there is a certain priest in Rome, rector of San Lorenzo in Lucina, who has started charitable work rather on the English pattern—no indiscriminate alms, careful inquiry, provision of work, exercise, recreation, country holidays, etc., in fine ' Settlement ' style. And his workers include people of all beliefs or none—Jews even. But as he is perfectly

correct in doctrine and observance, and does not meddle with any disputed points, he is let alone, and the experiment produces a quiet but very real effect. Yesterday our *parroco*, Padre Ruelli, came to see us here, an enchanting little man, with something of the old maid and the child and the poet all combined. He recited to us Leopardi, and explained some poems in Roman dialect, with an ease, a vivacity, a perfect simplicity, that charmed us all. Then he remembered his function, and before he left gave us a discourse on charity, containing a quotation from the Gospels, largely invented by himself, and so departed."

As the weeks went on in our bare, wind-swept *palazzo*, it became impossible to resist a community in which everyone, from Alessandro to this dear *padre parroco*, combined to show us that we were not only tolerated, but *welcomed*. Our Italian was sadly to seek during those first weeks, consisting largely in agonized consultations with Nutt's Pocket Dictionary, and in practising its phrases over with Alessandro; but his courtesy and patience never failed, so that before long our sentences began to put forth wings and soar. But never, alas, to any great heights, and even when Mrs. Ward was able to carry on animated conversations with our drivers about the traditions of the Alban Hills, she would find herself sitting tongue-tied and exasperated, or descending into French, at luncheon-parties in Rome!

Yet those luncheon-parties, and the visits which we persuaded the new friends, whom we made there, to pay us on our heights, laid the foundations of certain friendships which influenced Mrs. Ward's whole attitude towards the new Italy, and gave her the conviction, which she never lost in the years that followed, that there exists between the best English and the best Italian minds a certain natural affinity, which transcends the differences of habits and of speech more surely than is the case between ourselves and any other of our Continental neighbours. She put this feeling into the mouth of her ideal Ambassador in *Eleanor*—that slight but charming sketch which was, I believe, based upon the figure of Lord Dufferin—when he speaks to the American Lucy of the Marchesa Fazzoleni, symbol and type of Italian womanhood. "Look well at her," he says

to Lucy, " she is one of the mothers of the new Italy. She has all the practical sense of the north, and all the subtlety of the south. She is one of the people who make me feel that Italy and England have somehow mysterious affinities that will work themselves out in history. It seems to me that I could understand all her thoughts—and she mine, if it were worth her while. She is a modern of the moderns ; and yet there is in her some of the oldest stuff in the world. She belongs, it is true, to a nation in the making—but that nation, in its earlier forms, has already carried the whole weight of European history ! "

Figures such as these began, when the storms of an inhospitable April had passed away, to haunt the cool ilex avenue and the terrace beyond, filling Mrs. Ward's eager mind with new impressions, new perceptions of the infinite variety and delightsomeness of the human race ; and the old walls of Domitian's villa re-echoed to many an animated talk of Pope and Kingdom, Church and State, as well as to Lanciani's full-voiced exclamations on the buried treasures —nay, even Alba Longa itself !—that must lie at our feet there, only a few yards below the surface ! Then, once or twice, we took these guests of ours further afield, to the Lake of Nemi, in its circular crater-cup—" Lo Specchio di Diana " —with the ruined walls of the Temple of Diana rising amid their beds of strawberries at its further end. This was indeed a place of enchantment, and readers of *Eleanor* will remember how the *motif* of the " Priest who slew the slayer " is woven into the fabric of the story, while the turning-point in the drama of the three—Eleanor, Lucy and Manisty—is reached during an expedition to the Temple. Here it was that Count Ugo Balzani, best of friends and mentors, bought from the strawberry-pickers for a few francs a whole basketful of little terra-cotta heads—votive offerings of the Tiberian age—and gave them to Mrs. Ward ; and here that Henry James, during the few precious days that he spent with us at the Villa, found the peasant youth with the glorious name, Aristodemo, and set him talking of Lord Savile's diggings, and of the marble head that he himself had found—yes, he !—with nose and all complete, in his own garden, while the sun sank lower towards the crater-rim, and the rest of us sat spell-bound, listening to the dialogue.

Naturally, however, with Rome only fifteen miles away, we did not always remain upon our hill-top, and the days that Mrs. Ward spent in the city, making new friends and seeing old sights, were probably among the richest in her whole experience. The great ceremony in St. Peter's, when Leo XIII celebrated the twenty-first anniversary of his accession, is too well described in *Eleanor* to need any mention here, but there were days of mere wandering about the streets, shopping, exploring old churches and talking to the sacristans, when she breathed the very spirit of Rome and let its beauty sink into her soul. And there was one day when a kind and condescending Cardinal—*not* an Italian—offered to take her over the crypt of St. Peter's—a privilege not then easy to obtain for ladies—and to show her the treasures it contained. Little, however, did the poor Cardinal guess what a task he had undertaken. "The very kind Cardinal knew nothing whatever about the crypt, which was a little sad," wrote D. W. that evening, and Mrs. Ward herself thus described it to her husband: "It was very funny! The Cardinal was very kind, and astonishingly ignorant. Any English Bishop going over St. Peter's would, I think, have known more about it, would have been certainly more intelligent and probably more learned. You would have laughed if you could have seen your demure spouse listening to the Cardinal's explanations. But I said not a word—and came home and read Harnack!" A lamentable result, surely, of His Eminence's courteous efforts to grapple with the tombs of the Popes.

Through April, May, and half through June we stayed at the Villa, till the sun grew burning hot, and we were fain to adopt the customs of the country, keeping windows and shutters closed against the fierce mid-day. During the hot weather Mrs. Ward made an excursion, for purposes of *Eleanor*, to the wonderful forest-country in the valley of the Paglia, north of Orvieto, where the Marchese di Torre Alfina, a nephew of Mr. Stillman, had placed his agent's house at her disposal, and charged his people to look after her. There, with her husband and daughter, she spent two or three days exploring the forest roads and the volcanic torrent-bed, down which the Paglia rushes, learning all she could of the life and traditions of the village and of the

Maremma country beyond. It was a district wholly unknown to her and full of attraction and romance, which she has infused into the last chapters of *Eleanor*; it gave her, too, a feeling of the inexhaustible wealth of the Italian soil and race which reinforced her growing love for this land of her adoption. As the chapters of *Eleanor* swelled during the remainder of this year, so its theme took form and presence in the writer's mind—the eternal theme of the supplanting of the old by the young, whether in the history of States or of persons. Steadily Mrs. Ward's faith in the destiny of that vast Italy into whose life she had looked, if only for a moment, grew and strengthened, till she put it into words in the mouth of her Marchesa Fazzoleni, speaking to a group gathered in the Villa Borghese garden: "I tell you, Mademoiselle," she says to Lucy, "that what Italy has done in forty years is colossal—not to be believed! Forty years—not quite—since Cavour died. And all that time Italy has been like that cauldron—you remember?—into which they threw the members of that old man who was to become young. There has been a bubbling, and a fermenting! And the scum has come up—and up. And it comes up still, and the brewing goes on. But in the end the young, strong nation will step forth!" And Manisty himself, the upholder of the Old against the New, the contemner of Governments and officials, admits at last that Italy has defeated him, because, as he confesses to Lucy, "your Italy is a witch." "As I have been going up and down this country," so runs his recantation, "prating about their poverty, and their taxes, their corruption, the incompetence of their leaders, the folly of their quarrel with the Church; I have been finding myself caught in the grip of things older and deeper—incredibly, primævally old!—that still dominate everything, shape everything here. There are forces in Italy, forces of land and soil and race, only now fully let loose, that will re-make Church no less than State, as the generations go by. Sometimes I have felt as though this country were the youngest in Europe; with a future as fresh and teeming as the future of America. And yet one thinks of it at other times as one vast graveyard; so thick it is with the ashes and the bones of men."

Thus Mrs. Ward wove into her book, as was her wont, all the rich experience of her own mind, as she had gathered

and brooded over it during these months in Italy, and then, when all was finished, gave to it the prophetic dedication which has made her name beloved by many an Italian reader :

> "To Italy the beloved and beautiful,
> Instructress of our past,
> Delight of our present,
> Comrade of our future—
> The heart of an Englishwoman
> Offers this book."

CHAPTER IX

MRS. WARD AS CRITIC AND PLAYWRIGHT—FRENCH AND ITALIAN FRIENDS—THE SETTLEMENT VACATION SCHOOL

1899–1904

IN spite of the close and continuous toil that she put into the writing of *Eleanor* during the year 1899, Mrs. Ward found time, in the course of that year, for an effort of literary criticism to which she devoted the best powers of her mind, but which has never, perhaps, received the recognition it deserves. I refer to the Prefaces that she wrote to Messrs. Smith & Elder's "Haworth Edition" of the Brontë novels.

Mrs. Ward had always had a peculiarly vivid feeling for the genius and tragedy of the Brontë sisters, so that when Mr. George Smith asked her in 1898 to undertake these Prefaces she felt it impossible to resist a task not only attractive in itself, but presented to her in persuasive phrase by "Dr. John." For it is by this time a commonplace of Brontë lore that Lucy Snowe's first friend in the wilderness of Villette is no other than the young publisher who had first recognized Charlotte's greatness, though the situation between Lucy and Dr. John bears no resemblance to the actual friendship that arose between Mr. George Smith and his client. Still, the letters which Mr. Smith placed at Mrs. Ward's disposal for this task were sufficiently interesting to arouse her curiosity (one of them even described how Charlotte and he had gone together to the celebrated phrenologist, Dr. Brown, to have their heads examined!), and, taking her courage in both hands, she boldly asked him whether he had ever been in love with Charlotte Brontë? His reply is delightful as ever:

August 18, 1898.

MY DEAR MRS. HUMPHRY WARD,—

. . . I was amused at your questions. No, I never was in the least bit in love with Charlotte Brontë. I am afraid that the confession will not raise me in your opinion, but the truth is, I never could have loved any woman who had not some charm or grace of person, and Charlotte Brontë had none. I liked her and was interested by her, and I admired her—especially when she was in Yorkshire and I was in London. I never was coxcomb enough to suppose that she was in love with me. But I believe that my mother was at one time rather alarmed.

So with much toil and in the intervals of her other work, Mrs. Ward accomplished the four admirable Prefaces to Charlotte's novels, enjoying this return to her old critical work of the eighties and becoming more and more deeply possessed by the strange power of the Haworth sisters. Then in the winter she took up *Wuthering Heights* and *Wildfell Hall*, writing her introduction to the former under a stress of feeling so profound as to produce in her, for the first and last time since childhood, the desire to express herself in verse. Early one January morning she reached out for pencil and paper and wrote down this sonnet, sending it afterwards to George Smith to deal with as he would. He printed it in the *Cornhill Magazine* of February, 1900.

CHARLOTTE AND EMILY BRONTË.

Pale sisters! reared amid the purple sea
  Of windy moorland, where, remote, ye plied
All household arts, meek, passion-taught, and free,
  Kinship your joy, and Fantasy your guide!—
Ah! who again 'mid English heaths shall see
  Such strength in frailest weakness, or so fierce
  Behest on tender women laid, to pierce
The world's dull ear with burning poetry?—
Whence was your spell?—and at what magic spring,
  Under what guardian Muse, drank ye so deep
That still ye call, and we are listening;
  That still ye plain to us, and we must weep?—
Ask of the winds that haunt the moors, what breath
Blows in their storms, outlasting life and death!

Her introductions duly appeared in the bulky volumes of the Haworth Edition, and there, unfortunately, they lie

buried. The edition was doomed by its unwieldy *format*, and since the copyright had already disappeared, these "library volumes" were soon displaced by the lighter and handier productions of less stately publishing firms. But the Prefaces had made their mark. The literary world was delighted to welcome Mrs. Ward again among the critics, with whom she had earned her earliest successes, and passages such as the following, which gives her view of the ultimate position of women novelists and women poets, were much quoted and discussed:

"What may be said to be the main secret, the central cause, not only of Charlotte's success, but, generally, of the success of women in fiction, during the present century? In other fields of art they are still either relatively amateurs, or their performance, however good, awakens a kindly surprise. Their position is hardly assured; they are still on sufferance. Whereas in fiction the great names of the past, within their own sphere, are the equals of all the world, accepted, discussed, analysed, by the masculine critic, with precisely the same keenness and under the same canons as he applies to Thackeray or Stevenson, to Balzac or Loti.

"The reason, perhaps, lies first in the fact that, whereas in all other arts they are comparatively novices and strangers, having still to find out the best way in which to appropriate traditions and methods not created by women, in the art of speech, elegant, fitting, familiar speech, women are and and have long been at home. They have practised it for generations, they have contributed largely to its development. The arts of society and of letter-writing pass naturally into the art of the novel. Madame de Sévigné and Madame du Deffand are the precursors of George Sand; they lay her foundations, and make her work possible. In the case of poetry, one might imagine, a similar process is going on, but it is not so far advanced. In proportion, however, as women's life and culture widen, as the points of contact between them and the manifold world multiply and develop, will Parnassus open before them. At present those delicate and noble women who have entered there look still a little strange to us. Mrs. Browning, George Eliot, Emily Brontë, Marcelline Desbordes-Valmore—it is as though they had wrested something that did not belong to them, by a kind

of splendid violence. As a rule, so far, women have been poets in and through the novel—Cowper-like poets of the common life like Miss Austen, or Mrs. Gaskell, or Mrs. Oliphant; Lucretian or Virgilian observers of the many-coloured web like George Eliot, or, in some phases, George Sand; romantic or lyrical artists like George Sand again, or like Charlotte and Emily Brontë. Here no one questions their citizenship; no one is astonished by the place they hold; they are here among the recognized masters of those who know.

"Why? For, after all, women's range of material, even in the novel, is necessarily limited. There are a hundred subjects and experiences from which their mere sex debars them. Which is all very true, but not to the point. For the one subject which they have eternally at command, which is interesting to all the world, and whereof large tracts are naturally and wholly their own, is the subject of love—love of many kinds indeed, but pre-eminently the love between man and woman. And being already free of the art and tradition of words, their position in the novel is a strong one, and their future probably very great."

She sent her Prefaces to a few intimate friends, turning in this case chiefly to those French friends who represented for her the ultimate tribunal in literary matters. The older generation—Scherer, Taine, Renan—were passing away by this time, but a younger had followed them, of whom Paul Bourget, Brunetière of the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, the Gaston Paris, the Ribots, the Boutmys were among those whom Mrs. Ward would always seek out during her almost annual visits to Paris in these years. But among all her French acquaintance she came about this time to regard M. André Chevrillon, nephew of Taine, traveller and generous critic of English politics and literature, as the most sympathetic, for he seemed to combine with an almost miraculous knowledge of English the very essence of that *esprit français* which she continued to adore to the end of her life. He had first visited Mrs. Ward at Haslemere in 1891, as a "young French student lost in London," and he happened to be with us at Stocks at the time of the publication of the Haworth Edition (1900). A few days later Mrs. Ward received the following appreciation from him:

MADAME,—

Je désire tout de suite vous remercier de votre gracieux accueil et de la bonne journée que j'ai passée à Tring, mais je voudrais surtout essayer de vous dire un peu l'impression, l'émotion durable et qui me poursuit ici—que m'a donnée la lecture de vos admirables articles sur les Brontë. Je n'ai pas su le faire tandis que j'étais auprès de vous ; ce n'est que ce matin que j'ai lu l'article sur Charlotte et Jane Eyre et j'en suis encore tout hanté. Jamais âmes de poètes et d'artistes n'ont été sondées d'un coup d'œil plus pénétrant, plus rapide, plus exercé et plus sûr. Vous avez su, en quelques pages, montrer l'irréductible personnalité de ces âpres et douloureuses jeunes femmes en même temps que vous expliquiez les traits qui chez elles sont ethniques et généraux, la tendre, la nostalgique âme celtique, farouchement repliée sur soi avec ses pressentiments, ses divinisations magiques, sa faculté d'apercevoir dans les couleurs du ciel, dans les formes et les lignes que présente ça et là la nature des *signes* chargés de sens mystérieux et profond. . . . Enfin le dernier paragraphe où vous mettez Charlotte à sa place dans la littérature européenne nous rappelle la sûre *scholarship*, la puissance de généralisation auxquelles vous nous avez habitués, la faculté philosophique qui aperçoit *les idées* comme des forces vivantes, dramatiques qui se croisent, se combattent, moulent et façonnent les hommes, et sont les plus vraies des réalités.

M. Chevrillon shared, I think, with M. Jusserand and with M. Elie Halévy the distinction of being the most profound and sympathetic among French students of England at that time ; all three were firm friends of Mrs. Ward's, all charmed her into envious despair by their perfect command of our language. M. Jusserand—who as a young man on the staff of the French Embassy had been a constant visitor at Russell Square—would dash off such notes as this : " Dear Mrs. Ward—Are you in town, or rather what town is it you are in ? " and now in this matter of the Brontë Prefaces he wrote her his terrible confession :

" I spent yesternight a most charming evening reading your essay. Shall I confess that I feel with Kingsley, having had a similar experience ? I could never go

beyond the terrible beginning of *Shirley*—and yet I tried and did my best, and the book remains unread, and I the more sorry as my copy does not belong to me, but to Lady Jersey, who charged me to return it when I had finished reading. I really tried earnestly: I took the volume with me on several occasions; it has seen, I am sure, as many lands as wise Ulysses, having crossed the Mediterranean more than once and visited Assuan. But there it is, and I see from my writing-table its threatening green cloth and awful back, with plenty of repulsive persons within. And yet I *can* read. I have read with delight and unflagging interest Vol. I in-folio of the Rolls of Parliament, without missing a line. *Shirley*, I cannot. I must try again, were it only for the sake of the editor of the series!"

But in spite of these warm and in many cases lifelong friendships, Mrs. Ward did not find the French atmosphere an easy one in such a year as 1900. The South African War had followed on the Dreyfus Case, the Dreyfus Case on Fashoda, and the ties of friendship suffered an unkindly strain. Mrs. Ward spent a few spring weeks in Rome, where all was golden and delightful—forming new friendships every day, and passing into that second stage of intimacy where first impressions are tested and were not, for her, found wanting; then on the way home she lingered a little in Paris, plunging into the gay confusions of the Great Exhibition. Her literary friends offered her attentions and hospitalities as of old, but she felt at once the difference of atmosphere, describing it vividly in a letter to her brother Willie:

"Paris,
"*May* 16, 1900.

"We have had a delicious time in Rome, Dorothy and I, and now Paris and the Exhibition are interesting and stimulating, but are not Rome! I have come back more Italy-bewitched than ever. Rome was bathed in the most glorious sunshine. Every breath was life-giving—everything one saw was beauty. And the people are so kind, so clever, so friendly—so different from this *France malveillante*, between whom and us as it seems to me, Fashoda, Dreyfus and the Transvaal have opened a gulf

that it will take a generation to fill. In Rome we saw many people and I had much conversation that will be of use for the revision of *Eleanor*. The country is progressing enormously, the *Anno Santo* is a comparative failure, and the Jesuit hatred of England flourishes and abounds. The Harcourts were there and I had much talk with Sir William about politics and much else. He is very broken in health, but as amusing as ever. With him and Father Ehrle we went one morning through the show treasures of the Vatican, turned over and handled the Codex Vaticanus, the Michael Angelo letters, the wonderful illuminated Dante and much else. One day with two friends D. and I went to Viterbo, slept, and next day saw the two Cinquecento villas, the Villa Lante and Caprarola. Caprarola was a wonderful experience. Ten miles' drive into the mountains along a ridge 3,000 feet high, commanding on one side the Lake of Vico, on the other the whole valley of the Tiber from Assisi to Palestrina, with Soracte in the middle distance, and the great rampart of the Sabines half in snow and girdled with cloud. Between us and the plain, slopes of chestnut and vine, and on either side of the road delicious inlets of grass, starred thick with narcissus, running up into continents of broom that by now must be all gold. Then the great pentagonal palace of Caprarola, gloomy, magnificent, in an incomparable position, frescoed inside from top to toe by the Zuccheri, and containing in its great *sala* a series of portrait groups of Charles V, Francis I, Henry II, Philip II, of the greatest possible animation and brilliancy, and in almost perfect preservation."

After such delights the atmosphere of Paris must indeed have seemed cold, but Mrs. Ward could always see the other side of such a controversy, and took pleasure in reporting to her father a conversation she had had, while in Paris, with "a charming old man, formerly secretary of the Duc D'Aumale, and now curator of the Chantilly Museum."

"We had," she wrote, "a very interesting talk about the War and Dreyfus. 'Oh! I am all with the English,' he said—'they could not let that state of things in the Transvaal continue—the struggle was inevitable. But

then I have lived in England. I love England, and English people, and can look at matters calmly. As to the treatment of English people in Paris, remember, Madame, that we are just now a restless and discontented people. We are a disappointed people—we have lost our great position in the world, and we don't see how to get it back. That makes us rude and bitter. And then our griefs against England go back to the Crimea. The English officers then made themselves disliked—and in the great war of 1870, you were not sympathetic—we thought you might have done something for us, and you did nothing. Then you were much too violent about the *Affaire*. The first trial was abominable, but by the second trial we stand, we the *modérés* who think ourselves honest fellows. But you made no difference. The Press of both countries has done great harm. All that explains the present state of things. It is not the Boers—that is mainly a pretext, an opportunity."

It is perhaps a curious fact that while German learning and German methods of historical criticism had compelled Mrs. Ward's admiration from her earliest years, no crop of personal friendships with Germans had sprung from these sowings, as in the case of her French studies and her Italian sojournings. Dear, homely German governesses were almost the only children of the Fatherland with whom she had personal contact, her relations with certain Biblical scholars and with the translators and publishers of her books being confined to pen and ink. But there was one German scholar with whom she had at any rate a lengthy correspondence—Dr. Adolf Jülicher, of Marburg, whose monumental work on the New Testament she presented one day, in a moment of enthusiasm, to her younger daughter (aged seventeen), suggesting that she should translate it into English. The daughter dutifully obeyed, devoting the best part of the next three years to the task—only to find, when the work was all but finished, that the German professor had in the meantime brought out a new edition of his book, running to some 100 pages of additional matter. Dismay reigned at Stocks, but there was no help for it : the additional 100 pages had to be tackled. In the end Mrs. Ward herself seized on the proofs and went all through them, pen in hand ;

little indeed was left of the daughter's unlucky sentences by the time the process was complete. In vain we would point out to her that this was the " Lower Criticism " and therefore unworthy of her serious attention ; she would merely make a face at us and plunge with ardour—perhaps after a heavy day of writing—into the delightful task of defacing poor Mr. Reginald Smith's clean page-proofs. For these were the days when Mr. Reginald had practically taken over the business of Smith & Elder's from his father-in-law, George Smith, and one of the diversions that he allowed himself was to print Mrs. Ward's daughter's translation free of all profit to the firm. The profits, indeed, if any, were to go in full to the translator, but naturally the expenses of proof-correction stood on the debit side of the account. Hence the anxiety of the person who had once been seventeen whenever Mrs. Ward had had a particularly energetic day with the proofs of Jülicher !

Eleanor had had a triumphal progress in the monthly numbers of *Harper's Magazine* throughout this year (1900), and appeared at length in book-form on November 1. Mrs. Ward's pleasure in its reception was much enhanced by the warm appreciation given to Mr. Albert Sterner's illustrations—clever and charming drawings, which had wonderfully caught the spirit of her characters and of the Italian scene, for Mr. Sterner had spent two or three weeks with us at the Villa Barberini. He and Mrs. Ward were fast friends, and it was always a matter of real delight to her whenever he could be secured to illustrate one of her subsequent novels. This was to be the case with *William Ashe, Fenwick's Career* and *The Case of Richard Meynell*. The publication of *Eleanor* coincided, however, with news of Mr. Arnold's serious illness in Dublin, so that the chorus of delight in her " Italian novel " reached Mrs. Ward's ears muffled by the presence of death.

Thomas Arnold died on November 12, 1900, tended to the last by his surviving children, and by the devoted second wife (Miss Josephine Benison), whom he had married in 1889. Mrs. Ward's affection for him had never wavered throughout these many years, as the letters which she wrote him about all her doings, once or even twice in every week, attest to this day ; his mystical, child-like spirit attracted her invincibly. Three days after his death she wrote to Bishop

Creighton, over whom the same summons was already hovering :

November 15, 1900.

MY DEAR BISHOP,—

Many, many thanks. It was very dear of you to write to me, especially at this time of illness, and I prize much all that you say. My father's was a rare and *hidden* nature. Among his papers that have now come to me I have come across the most touching and remarkable things—things that are a revelation even to his children. The service yesterday in Newman's beautiful little University Church, the early mass, the bright morning light on the procession of friends and clergy through the cypress-lined paths of Glasnevin, the last 'requiescat in pace,' answered by the Amen of the little crowd—all made a fitting close to his gentle and laborious life. He did not suffer much, I am thankful to say, and he knew that we were all round him and smiled upon us to the last.

And he on his side regarded her with an adoring affection that sometimes found touching expression in his letters, as when, a few months after the publication of *David Grieve*, he broke out in these words :

" My own dearest Polly (let me call you for once what I often called you when a child), God made you what you are, and those who love you will be content to leave you to Him. He gave you that wide-flashing, swiftly-combining wit, 'glancing from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven' ; He gave you also the power of turning your thoughts, with deft and felicitous hand, into forms of beauty. No one can divine what new problems will occupy you in time to come, nor how you will solve them ; but one may feel sure that with you, as Emerson says, 'the future will be worthy of the past.' "

Yet there was hardly a public question, especially in his later years, on which Mrs. Ward and her father did not differ profoundly ; for Tom Arnold hated " Imperialism " and the modern world, especially such manifestations of it as the Omdurman campaign and the South African War. Mrs. Ward, on the other hand, watched the former with all the pride and dread that comes from a personal stake in the adventure ; for was not Colonel Neville Lyttelton in com-

mand of a brigade, and had he not left his wife and children under our care at Stocks Cottage ? She had found a task for Mrs. Lyttelton's quick mind, to while away the too-long hours of that summer, in a translation into English of the "Pensées" of Joubert ; their consultations over the fine shades of his meaning, while the bees hummed in the lime-tree on the lawn, became the light and relaxation of her days, while, later on, the Introduction she contributed to the book helped its appearance with the public. And when Colonel Lyttelton came home, a happy soldier, and pegged out the Omdurman campaign for us on the drawing-room floor with matches, how was it possible not to rejoice with him in the overthrow of so dark a tyranny as the Khalifa's ?

But the South African War was a matter of far more mingled feelings, though on the whole Mrs. Ward was persuaded that we were right as against President Kruger and his methods, and upheld this view in many a letter to her father :

> "I am not without sympathy for the Boers," she wrote to him in November, 1899, "and I often try to realize their case and how the invasive unwelcome English power looks to them. But it seems to me that history—which for me is God—makes very stern decisions between nations. The Boers have had their chance of an ascendancy which must have been theirs if they had known how to work for it and deserve it ; they have missed it, and the chance now passes to England. If she is not worthy of it, it won't remain with her—that one may be sure. But I must say that the loyalty of the other colonies—especially of French-speaking Canada ; the pacification and good government of India, the noble development of Egypt, are to me so many signs that at present we *are* fit to rule, and are meant to rule. But we shall rule only so long as we execute righteous judgment and so long as it is for the good of the world that we should rule."

She would have liked to see peace made after Lord Roberts' early victories, and was for a time in favour of such terms as would not have involved annexation. But when this hope failed she settled down to endure the thing, and in 1901 devoted much time and labour to the improvement of the Boer women's and children's lot in the concentration camps. She joined the committee of the Victoria League

formed for this purpose. And, as inevitably happens in all such controversies, the passion felt by the other side contributed to the hardening of her own opinion, so that the end of the war found her more staunch an Imperialist, more definite a Conservative, than she would have admitted herself to be before it.

It was during the war-shadowed winter of 1900–1901 that Mrs. Ward suffered a series of heavy personal losses in the death of many of her oldest friends, beginning with Mr. James Cropper, of Ellergreen, her quasi-uncle,[1] with whom she had been on the most affectionate terms ever since her childhood. This occurred a bare month before her father's death ; then, two months later (January 14, 1901), came the blow that the whole country felt as a catastrophe, the death of Bishop Creighton, and, early in April, a loss that came home very sadly to Mrs. Ward, that of her well-beloved publisher and friend, George Smith. " I never had a truer friend or a wiser counsellor," she wrote of him, and indeed he combined these qualities with so shrewd a humour and so unvarying a kindness that Mrs. Ward might well count herself fortunate to have enjoyed fourteen years of familiar intercourse with him.

> " His position as a publisher was very remarkable," she wrote to her son. " He was the friend of his authors, their counsellor, banker and domestic providence often—as Murray was to Byron. But nobody would ever have dared to take the liberties with him that Byron did with Murray."

When he was gone, Mrs. Ward was fortunate enough to find in his successor, Reginald Smith, an equally just and generous adviser, on whose friendship she leant more and more until death took him too, in the tragic winter of 1916.

The remarkable success of *Eleanor* in the United States (where the character of Lucy Foster won all hearts) led to inquiries being made from certain theatrical quarters there as to whether Mrs. Ward would not undertake to dramatize it. The suggestion attracted her at once, for though she had never written anything for the stage she had, all her life, been a keenly interested critic of plays and actors and a devoted adherent of French methods as against

[1] Mr. Cropper's brother had married Susan Arnold, sister of Tom.

the heavy English stage conventions. But when she seriously confronted the problem she felt herself too ignorant of stagecraft to undertake the task unaided, and therefore called in to her counsels that delightful writer of light comedy, Julian Sturgis, whom she persuaded to collaborate with her. Could she have foreseen the play's delays, the insolence of box offices and the manifold despairs that awaited her in this new path, probably even her high courage would have turned aside, but the co-operation it brought her with so rare a spirit as Julian Sturgis was at any rate a very living compensation. In the spring of 1901 Mr. Sturgis came out to stay with us in a villa we had taken (on the spur of the moment) on the outskirts of Rapallo (not then celebrated as the scene of international "pacts"), and together he and his hostess plunged with ardour into the business of making their puppets move. The work was extraordinarily hard, while the skies above our crimson villa behaved as though it were Westmorland and the Mediterranean thundered on the sea-wall of our garden; but Mrs. Ward enjoyed the stimulus and novelty of it immensely and always declared that she owed much even for her novelist's art to that week of "grind" with Mr. Sturgis. Nor was it quite all grind, for one day, when the sun at last shone, we took our guest and his tall Eton boy up the long pilgrimage-way to the Madonna di Montallegro, overtaking a party of laden peasant-women as we went to whom Mr. Sturgis offered some passing kindness. His advances were met by a torrent of words in some uncouth dialect which none of us could understand, but he chose to appropriate them to himself as a prayer offered to "Santo Giulio," and "Santo Giulio" he remained to Mrs. Ward and all of us for the too-short remnant of his life.[1] The play stood up and lived by the time his visit was ended; but this was only the beginning of endless heartaches and disappointments. At first there were hopes of the Duse, then of Mrs. Pat; then Mr. Benson was to produce it with a clever and charming amateur actress of our acquaintance in the rôle of Eleanor; then at length a real promise was secured from a well-known actor-manager, and all was fixed for May, 1902. But the promise was not an agreement, and was therefore mortal; when it died Mr. Sturgis's only comment was: "My dear Mrs. Ward,

[1] He died in April, 1904.

I am not a bit surprised. My deep distrust of the theatrical world, wherein pretending gets into the blood, makes me sceptical of any promises which are not stamped, signed and witnessed by a legion of angels."

Already, however, Miss Marion Terry, Miss Robins and Miss Lilian Braithwaite had promised in no spirit of "pretending" to play the three principal parts, so that with things so well advanced on that side Mrs. Ward determined to go forward. Since the managers were timid she would take a theatre and bear the risk herself. Finally all was settled with the Court Theatre, and the delightful agony of the rehearsals began (October, 1902). Miss Terry sprained a tendon in her leg, but gallantly limped through her part, while the constant changes called for in the words, the cuts and compressions, made a bewildering variety of versions that left the lay onlooker gasping. Mrs. Ward, however, was equal to all occasions—even to a last-minute change in the actor who played Manisty[1]—until not one of the cast but was moved to astonishment and admiration, not only by her versatility, but by her long-suffering. Add to this her endless consideration for themselves—for their comfort, their feelings or their clothes—and it is easy to understand the feelings of real affection which grew up between author and actors as the play went on. Yet all was of no avail, or, at least, it failed to conquer the great heart of the British public. The cast was admirable, the reviews were kind—though Mr. Walkley in *The Times* perhaps gave the key to the situation when he ended his article with the words, "But then, who *could* play Manisty?" Yet, somehow, the audience (after the first day) failed to fill the seats. *Eleanor* ran for only fifteen matinées, October 30—November 15, and

[1] *Eleanor* was finally played with the following cast:

Edward Manisty	Mr. Charles Quartermaine
Father Benecke	Mr. Stephen Powys
Reggie Brooklyn	Mr. Leslie Faber
Alfredo	Mr. Victor Bridges
Lucy Foster	Miss Lilian Braithwaite
Madame Variani	Miss Rosina Filippi
Alice Manisty	Miss Elizabeth Robins
Marie	Miss Mabel Archdall
Dalgetty	Miss Beatrix de Burgh
	and
Eleanor Burgoyne	Miss Marion Terry

though much was said of a revival, she only once again saw the footlights—in a couple of special matinées given in aid of the Passmore Edwards Settlement. And yet—what fun it had been! Though the financial loss made her rueful, Mrs. Ward always looked back to those six weeks at the Court Theatre as a breathless but happy episode, during which she had looked deep into the technique of a new art and brought from it, not success indeed, but much valuable experience which she might bring to bear upon her future work. Certainly the two novels of these years, *Lady Rose's Daughter* and the *Marriage of William Ashe*, gained much in sureness of touch, terseness and finish from Mrs. Ward's dramatic studies; *Lady Rose* was in fact acclaimed by the critics as the book in which, at last, the writer showed "the predominance of the artistic over the ethical instinct, the subordination of the didactic to the artistic impulse."

She never dramatized it, but a dramatized version of *William Ashe*, at which Mrs. Ward toiled extremely hard, in collaboration with Miss Margaret Mayo, during 1905, was accepted by an American "stock company" and acquired a considerable reputation in the States. In London, however, where it was performed by a semi-American cast in 1908, it fell very flat, Mrs. Ward being fortunately spared the sight of it owing to the fact that she herself was across the Atlantic at the time. The actress who played Kitty, wishing to leave the author in no doubt as to the cause of its failure, cabled to her after the first night, "Press unfriendly to play—*my* performance highly praised!" Even so, however, the Manager decided to withdraw it after a three weeks' run, and no play of Mrs. Ward's was ever afterwards performed in England.

Among the most absorbed spectators of the first performance of *Eleanor*, watching it from an arm-chair brought for his ease into the author's box, was the pathetic figure of Mrs. Ward's eldest brother, William Arnold. His health had broken down some years before, while he was still assistant editor of the *Manchester Guardian*, and he had come to live, with his wife, in a small house in Chelsea, where it was Mrs. Ward's delight to find him, on his better days, and to discuss all things in heaven and earth with him. No comradeship could ever have been closer than was theirs, though intercourse with him would always end in a strangling heart-

ache for his state of health, for noble gifts submerged by bodily pain, despite as gallant a fight as was ever waged by suffering man. Mrs. Ward was for ever watching over him and helping him ; sending him abroad in search of sun and warmth ; having him to stay with her at Stocks, in London, or at some villa in Italy ; encouraging him to do what work he could. But most they loved their talks together. Their tastes would usually agree on literary matters, and differ on politics, but no matter what the subject, his flashes of mischief and malice would light up the most ordinary topic, and no one loved better to draw him out, and to set him railing or praising, than his sister. How they would talk, sometimes, about the details of her craft, about Jane Austen, or Trollope, or George Meredith! For this latter they both had a feeling akin to adoration, based on a knowledge not only of his novels but of his poems (then not a common accomplishment) ; and I remember W. T. A. once saying to me that he thought the jolliest line in English poetry was

Gentle beasties through pushed a cold long nose.

Mrs. Ward's feeling for the old giant of Box Hill led her on all occasions to champion his right to be regarded as the greatest living master of English—as may be seen from the following spirited letter (January 19, 1902) addressed to the secretary of the Society of Authors, when that body had, in her view, made the wrong decision in recommending Herbert Spencer instead of Meredith for the Nobel Prize.

" However eminent Mr. Spencer may be " (she wrote), " and however important his contribution to English thought, there must be a great many of us who will feel, when it is a question of interrogating English opinion as to the most distinguished name among us in pure literature, there can be only one answer—George Meredith. It is no reply to say that the Swedish Academy will probably know something of Mr. Herbert Spencer, and may know little or nothing about Mr. Meredith. That is their affair, not ours. The meaning and purpose of this prize has been illustrated by the selection of M. Sully Prud'homme. Its recipient should be surely, first and foremost, a man of letters, and, if possible, a representative of what the Germans call ' Dichtung,' whether in prose or verse.

"If Mr. Meredith had written nothing but the love-scenes in *Richard Feverel*; *The Egoist*; and certain passages of description in *Vittoria* and *Beauchamp's Career*, he would still stand at the head of English 'Dichtung.' There is no critic now who can be ranged with him in position, and no poet. As a man of letters he is easily first; to compare Mr. Spencer's power of clear statement with the play of imaginative genius in Meredith would be absurd—in the literary field. And this is or should be a literary award.

I trust that in writing thus I shall not be misunderstood. I am not venturing to dispute Mr. Spencer's great position in the history of English thought—I have neither the wish nor the capacity for anything of the kind. But to be the philosopher of evolution is one thing; to be our first man of letters is another. I would submit that English opinion is asked to point out our most distinguished man of letters, and that if we cannot unanimously say 'George Meredith!' we are not worthy that Genius should come among us at all."

But only two years after this outburst (which I feel sure she showed him) her comradeship with "Will" ended for ever, and his sufferings ceased. He died on May 29, 1904.[1]

About the same time as she lost her beloved brother, Mrs. Ward acquired a new member of the family in the person of her son-in-law, George Macaulay Trevelyan, son of Sir George Otto Trevelyan. He and her younger daughter became engaged at the Villa Bonaventura, Cadenabbia—which Mrs. Ward had taken from Mr. Alfred Trench—in May, 1903—and ten months later they were married at Oxford. Mrs. Ward soon became much devoted to her son-in-law, whose ardent faiths and non-faiths challenged and stimulated her, bringing her into touch with movements of thought that ran parallel to, but had not yet mingled with, her own belief in a more reasonable Christianity. The walls of her room at Stocks would re-echo, during his visits, with the most fundamental discussions! Mr. Chamberlain, too, was a disturbing element in those days, with his Tariff Reform campaign, for what was Mrs. Ward to do when her son took

[1] See the *Memoir of W. T. Arnold*, by Mrs. Ward and C. E. Montague.

one side and her son-in-law the other—and when, moreover, her own well-trained mind was perfectly capable of understanding the arguments of each? But whatever the subject of these discussions, whether politics or religion, they only served to increase the affection between the two, which grew and deepened with every turn of fortune that the years might bring.

It is perhaps interesting to speculate what might have been the development of Mrs. Ward's powers if her intellect had never been captured by the dramatic spell, and if other sides of that "wide-flashing" mind had been allowed to work themselves out unchecked. For in the lull that followed the completion of *Eleanor* she had conceived the writing of a "Life of Christ" based on such a re-interpretation of the Gospel story as she believed had been made possible by the research of the last half-century. She brooded much over this theme and even discussed it with her publishers. But whether it was that her continued ill-health made her shrink from the heavy toil involved by such a task—the re-reading and collating of all her Germans, the study of an infinite amount of fresh material, and probably a journey to Palestine—or whether the practical side of Christianity had by now absorbed too large a share of her time and her powers, the project never came to fruition, though it never ceased to attract her.

And indeed, Mrs. Ward's practical adventures in well-doing during these years would have been enough to fill the lives of any three ordinary individuals, without any such diversions as the writing of novels or the hammering out of plays. The affairs of the Settlement were always on her shoulders, not only as regards the financial burden of its maintenance, but in all the personal questions that inevitably arose in such a busy hive of humanity. If the nurse of the Invalid School had words with the porter, the case was sure to come up to her for judgment, while any misdemeanour among the young people themselves who frequented the building would cause her the most anxious searchings of heart. But "it does not do to start things and then let them drift," as she wrote in these days to one of us, and she continued to cherish the Settlement, to support the Warden (Mr. Tatton) in his difficulties and to beg for money, with an

extraordinary vitality as well as an extraordinary patience. Yet in spite of all, the Settlement was far more of joy to her than of burden, and on its children's side it never ceased to be pure joy from the beginning. For was it not always possible to devise new ways of making the children happy, as well as to continue the old ? The principal way in which Mrs. Ward's work extended itself at this time was in the opening of the "Vacation School," designed to bring in from the streets in large numbers the children left stranded during the August holiday,—and if anyone will take the trouble to wander through the back streets during that happy season, and to note what he sees, there will be little doubt in his mind that such a school must be a real deliverance. Mrs. Ward had taken the idea from an account by Mr. Henry Curtis in *Harper's Magazine* (early in 1902) of the first schools of the kind started in New York, and her mind had at once grasped the possibilities of such a scheme. There stood the Settlement with its fine shady garden in the rear, empty and dumb through the holidays: surely it would be a sin not to use it !

She collected a special fund from a few old friends of the Settlement, appointed an admirable director in the person of Mr. E. G. Holland, an assistant master at the Highgate Secondary School, enlisted the help of all the schools around to send us such children only as had no chance of a country holiday, and then issued invitations to some 750, divided into two batches, morning and afternoon. The result was an orderly and delighted crowd which, owing to Miss Churcher's and Mr. Holland's faultless organization, moved from class to class and from garden to building without the smallest hitch, played and dug in the "waste ground" beyond the garden, specially thrown open to the school by the Duke of Bedford, and when rain came marched into the building and filled its basement rooms and the pleasant library and class-rooms without any confusion or squabbling. The occupations were much the same as those already in use for the "Recreation School," and never failed to attract and then to keep the children ; while the spirit of good fellowship that the atmosphere of the school engendered had a marked effect on their manners as the four weeks of the school passed away. Here is Mrs. Ward's own account of the contrast presented by the children as they were in the

Vacation School and as they could not help being in a mean street only half a mile away :[1]

" Last week a lady interested in the school was passing through one of the slum streets to the west of Tottenham Court Road. Much good work has been done there by many agencies. But in August most of the workers are away. Dirty, ragged, fighting or querulous children covered the pavement, or seemed to be bursting out of the grimy houses. The street was filthy, the clothes of the children to match. There was no occupation ; the little souls were given up to ' the weight of chance desires ' ; and whatever happiness there was must have been of rather a perilous sort. The same spectator passed on, and half a mile eastward entered the settlement building in Tavistock Place. Here were nearly 300 children (the children of the Evening Session), divided between house and garden, many of them from quarters quite as poor as those she had just traversed. But all was order, friendliness and enjoyment. Every child was clean and neat, though the clothes might be poor ; if a boy brushed past the visitor, it would be with a pleasant ' Excuse me, Miss ' ; in the manual training-room boys looked up from the benches with glee to show the models they had made ; the drawing-room of the settlement was full of little ones busy with the unfamiliar delights of brush or pencil ; in the library boys were sitting hunched up over *Masterman Ready*, or the ever-adored *Robinson Crusoe* ; girls were deep in *Anderson's Fairy Tales* or *The Cuckoo Clock*, the little ones were reading Mr. Stead's *Books for the Bairns* or looking at pictures ; outside in the garden under the trees clay modelling and kindergarten games were going on, while the sand-pit was crowded with children enjoying themselves heartily without either shouting or fighting. Meanwhile in the big hall parents were thronging in to see the musical drill, the dancing or the acting, or to listen to the singing ; the fathers as proud as the mothers that Willie was ' in the Shakespeare,' or Nellie ' in the Gavotte.' The visitor had only to watch to see that the teachers were obeyed at a word, at a glance, and that the children loved

[1] From *The Associate*, the quarterly magazine of the Passmore Edwards Settlement, for October, 1902.

to obey. Everywhere was discipline, good temper, pleasure. And next day the school broke up with the joining of 600 voices in the old hymn 'O God, our help in ages past.' Surely no contrast could be more complete."

And in conclusion Mrs. Ward made her characteristic appeal:

"Shall we not enter seriously on the movement and call on our public authorities to take it up? Who can doubt the need of it, even when all allowance is made for country holidays of all sorts? Extend and develop country holidays as you will, London in the summer vacation month will never be without its hundreds of thousands of children for whom these Vacation Schools, properly managed, would be almost a boon of fairyland."

The Vacation School had indeed been watched with much interest by the London School Board, which had also co-operated by the lending of furniture and "stock," but the transference of its powers to the London County Council made a bad atmosphere, just at this time, for the adoption of new experiments, and the new "London Education Authority" which arose in 1903 was only too glad to leave the carrying-on of the Settlement Vacation School to Mrs. Ward. Every year it seemed to increase in popularity. Mr. Holland remained director for thirteen consecutive Augusts (1902–1914); the numbers of the school rose to 1,000 per day in later years, when an additional building became available, and Mrs. Ward could have no greater pleasure, when the pressure of her literary work permitted, than to come up from Stocks for a day to watch her holiday children. But in spite of the universally recognized success of her experiment, this and the "Holiday School" organized by the Browning Settlement from 1904 onwards remained practically the only efforts of the kind carried on in London, until at length, in 1910, the L.C.C. followed suit by opening six Vacation Schools in different parts of the metropolis, housed in the ordinary school buildings and playgrounds. They were an enormous boon to the children of those districts, but the Council did not persist in its good deeds, for after two years these Holiday Schools were allowed to drop, and have never, unfortunately, been revived. Indeed, in June, 1921, a resolution was passed, prohibiting any expenditure on Holiday Schools or Organized Playgrounds.

So does the London child pay its share of the War Debt.

But the Vacation School at the Settlement has never lapsed, since the first day that Mrs. Ward opened it in August, 1902, although in these times of forced economy the numbers are less than of old. But there, under the great plane-trees in the garden, the trestle-tables are still set up and the children still congregate, bearing their laughing testimony to the memory of one who knew their little hearts, and who, seeing them shepherdless in the hot streets, could not rest until they were gathered in.

CHAPTER X

LONDON LIFE—THE BEGINNINGS AND GROWTH OF THE CHILDREN'S PLAY CENTRES

1904—1917

BOTH *Lady Rose's Daughter* and *The Marriage of William Ashe*, which appeared in 1903 and 1905 respectively, are novels of London life, reflecting in their minor characters, their talk and the incidents that accompany the tale, that intimate aquaintance with the world of London which Mrs. Ward had acquired during the many years that she had spent in observing it, in working with it, and in sharing some of the rarer forms of the rewards which it has to give. The central theme in each case is a broadly human one, but the setting and the savour are those of London—that all-devouring London which she loved so well, but from which, after a few weeks of its turmoil, she was always so thankful to escape. It was now twenty years and more since she and Mr. Ward had come to live in the pretty old house in Russell Square where they had first gathered their friends around them, and where her Thursdays had first become an institution; but time had not dimmed her zest for friendship and for talk, so that the Thursdays and the frequent dinner-parties continued at Grosvenor Place through all the years that followed. She would never have claimed that they amounted to a *salon*, for, in spite of *Lady Rose's Daughter*, her belief was that a *salon*, properly so-called, was not in the English tradition, and could hardly survive outside Paris; yet I think that if one had taken the opinion of those who frequented them they would have said that Mrs. Ward's afternoons or evenings made a remarkable English equivalent. She herself did not disguise the fact that she regarded good talk as an art, and enjoyed nothing more than the play

of mind on mind and the quick thrust and parry that occasionally sweeps across a dinner-table; but she had no illusions as to the natural inaptitude of the English for the art, and would often quote the exasperated remark of her great friend in Rome, Contessa Maria Pasolini, after an evening spent in entertaining English visitors: "You English, you need so much winding up! Now, if I were merely to tear up a piece of paper and throw it down among my French friends, they would talk about it delightfully all the evening!" Hence her injunctions to her children, when they began to take wing and go forth to "social junketings" of their own, not to be stuck-up or blasé, and above all "not to sit like a stuck pig when you get there!" To exert one's wits to make a party go was part of one's social duty, just as much as handing the tea-cake or opening the door, and she herself, in spite of a natural absence of small talk which made her formidable sometimes to new acquaintances, would faithfully follow her own precepts. But with her the effort was second nature, for it sprang from her inborn desire to place herself in sympathetic relations with her neighbour, to draw out the best in him, to set him going. And so the talk that was heard at Grosvenor Place, whether at her small luncheon-parties, her Thursdays, or her dinners, always took from her first and foremost the quality of reality; people talked—or made her talk—of the things they knew or cared about, and since her range was so wide, and there was always, as an old friend expressed it, "so much tinder about" among her guests, the result was a certain vividness and vitality that left their mark, and have been long remembered. And, as one of those who knew her best said once on a public occasion,[1] she had the secret of making you feel, as you left her house, that you were a much finer fellow than you thought when you went in; she made you believe in yourself, for she had, by some subtle magic—or perhaps by the simplest of all—brought out gifts or powers in you which you hardly knew that you possessed.

As to the persons who came and went in that pretty room, looking out on the garden of Buckingham Palace, how is it possible to number or name them, or to recall the flavour

[1] Sir Hugh Bell at the unveiling of the memorial to Mrs. Ward at the Mary Ward Settlement, July, 1922.

of their long-vanished conversation? Many have, like their hostess, passed into the unknown: figures like Leslie Stephen, who wrote to her often, especially after his wife's death, and came at intervals to Grosvenor Place for a long *tête-à-tête*, sitting on the sofa beside Mrs. Ward, his ear-trumpet between them; or like the much-loved Burne-Jones, who came at an earlier stage and too soon ceased to come, for he died in 1898, leaving her only a little bundle of letters which she affectionately treasured; or again, like Lady Wemyss, the deep-voiced, queerly-dressed *grande dame*, whom Mrs. Ward loved for her heart's sake, and of whom she has recorded a suggestion, perhaps, in the Lady Winterbourne of *Marcella*; and ah! how many more, of whom it would be unprofitable for the after-born to write. Mrs. Ward has left in her novels the mirror of the world in which she lived and moved, and in her *Recollections* a more intimate picture of her friends. To try to add to these records would be but to tempt the Gods.

But at what a cost in fatigue of body and mind even her entertaining was carried on, those who passed their days with Mrs. Ward may at least tell. It was always the same story. She put so much of herself into whatever she was doing that the effort produced exhaustion. And so, after her Thursdays, or perhaps after some gathering of Settlement workers to whom she had been talking individually, she would collapse upon the sofa, white and speechless, only fit to be "stroked" and left to gather her forces again as best she might. There was one Thursday in the month when, after her own "At Home," she was obliged to attend the Settlement Council meeting at eight o'clock. This meant that there was no time for recuperation between the two, but only for a hurried meal, filled with hasty consultations as to the evening's notes, letters and telephonings that must be done during her absence; then she would go off, and some time towards eleven would return, worn out and crumpled, though perhaps with the light of battle still in her eye over some point well raised or some victory won. At the Settlement she would have given no hint of any disability, and would have been the life and soul of the meeting. Perhaps only her friend the Warden knew what a struggle against physical pain and weakness her presence there had implied. We used to chaff her sometimes about

the physical ailments of her heroines, who, according to our robust ideas, were too fond of turning white or of letting their lips tremble, but this trick of her novels expressed only too deep an experience of her own, since never, in all the years that she was writing, did she know what it was to have a day of ordinary physical strength. On many and many of her guests she made the illusion of being a strong woman, but could they have seen her when the talk and the excitement were over, they would have known that it was only her spirit that had carried her through. The body was always dragged after, a more or less protesting slave.

Her way of life at Grosvenor Place was naturally one which involved a good deal of expenditure. Sometimes she would have searchings of heart over this, or even momentary spasms of economy, but it sprang in reality from two fundamental causes—one her delight in beautiful things, inherited even in her starved childhood from her mother, and shared to the full in later years with her husband; the other this constant ill-health, which made her incapable of "roughing it," and rendered a certain amount of luxury indispensable if she was to get through her daily task. Good pictures and the right kind of furniture gave her a definite joy for their own sakes, while the arrangement of the chairs and tables in the manner best calculated to encourage talk was always a fascinating problem. Clothes, too, were not to be despised, and though she liked to sit and work in some old rag that had seen better days, it amused her also to go and plan some beautiful thing with her dressmaker, Mrs. Kerr, and it amused her to wear the "creation" when it was finished. Her faithful maid, Lizzie, who had been with us since the early days of Russell Square, and who was often more nurse than maid to her, cut and altered and renovated in her little workroom upstairs, while every now and then Mrs. Ward would issue forth and make a raid upon the shops, coming home either triumphant to face the criticism of her family, or very low because she knew she had been beguiled into buying something which she now positively hated. She was extremely particular, too, about her daughters' clothes, nor could she make up her mind, when they came out, to give them a dress allowance, being far too much interested herself in the

problem of how they looked ; but even when she was fully responsible for some luckless garment of theirs she would often break out, on its first appearance, with the fatal words, " Go upstairs, take that off, and let me *never* see it again until it's completely re-made ! "—usually uttered amid helpless giggles, for this had become, by long use, a stock phrase in our family.

Strangers coming from afar with some claim upon her kindness found always a ready welcome at her house. In addition to her French and Italian friends, who would find their way to her door as soon as they arrived in London, she had many warm friendships with Americans, beginning with her much-loved cousin, Frederick W. Whitridge, who had married Matthew Arnold's daughter Lucy, and had got Mr. Ward to build a comely house for her within half a mile of Stocks. " Cousin Fred," with his charming blue eyes and white moustache and beard, had been a truly Olympian figure to us children even in the days of Russell Square, for had he not deposited on our plates at breakfast, one golden morning, a sovereign each for the two elders and half a sovereign for the youngest ? And as the years passed on, and he became the intimate friend of Roosevelt and a recognized leader of the New York Bar, the friendship between him and Mrs. Ward grew ever deeper, so that his shrewd wisdom and inimitable humour, as well as his habit of spoiling the people he was fond of, came to be looked for each summer as one of the true pleasures of the year. His son was one of the first Americans to join the British Army in 1914, but he himself, like Henry James, was not to see the day for which both he and Roosevelt had toiled so hard. He died in December, 1916, four months before America " came in." Mr. Lowell, the American Ambassador during the 'eighties, had been a frequent visitor at Russell Square, while his successors, Hay, Bayard and Choate, were all on friendly terms with Mrs. Ward. Comrades in her own trade whom it always pleased her to see were Mr. Gilder, editor of the *Century Magazine*, welcome whether he came as publisher or friend ; Mr. Godkin, of the *Evening Post*, the most intellectual among American journalists ; Mr. S. S. McClure, who had first tracked down Mrs. Ward at Borough Farm, and remained ever afterwards on cordial, not to say familiar, terms with her ; Charles Dudley Warner,

Mrs. Wharton, the William James's, and many more. But the most intimate of all were certain women : that inseparable and delightful pair, Mrs. Fields and Miss Sarah Orne Jewett (the writer of New England stories), who twice found their way to Stocks, and many times to Grosvenor Place, and lastly that other Bostonian, Miss Sara Norton, whose friendship for Dorothy made her almost as another daughter during her visits to Stocks, to Levens, or to the Villa Bonaventura.

But it was not by any means only for the " distinguished," whether from home or abroad, that Grosvenor Place laid itself out. One of its principal functions was that of making the head-quarters in London for all the younger members of Mrs. Ward's own family, as well as for the grandchildren who began about this time to find their way to her knee. For to all such young people she was mother, fairy godmother and friend rolled into one. Settlement workers and Associates, teachers and many " dim " people of various professions would find her as accessible as her strenuous hours of labour would allow. All she asked of those who came to her house was that they should have something real to contribute—and if possible that they should contribute it without egotism. Certainly she did not suffer bores gladly ; an ordinary bore was bad enough, but an egotistic bore would produce a peculiar kind of nervous irritation in her which we who watched could always detect, however manfully she strove to conceal it. Nor could she ever bring herself to observe the strict rules of London etiquette, so that to " go calling " was an unknown occupation in her calendar, and in spite of two daughters and a secretary her social lapses and forgetfulnesses sometimes plunged her in black despair. When she had hopelessly missed Mrs. So-and-So's party, to which she had fully meant to go, she would sorrowfully declare that the motto of the Ward family ought to be : " Never went and never wrote."

It is needless to point out how exhausting this London life became to one who pressed so much into it as Mrs. Ward. For although she could rarely write her books in London, being far too distracted by the demands of the hungry world upon her time, it was mainly at Grosvenor Place that she hammered out her schemes for the welfare of London's children, talking them over with members of

the School Board or the County Council, driving about to some of the poorest districts to see with her own eyes the conditions under which they lived, and planning out the details in mornings of hard work with Miss Churcher. The development of the Cripples' Schools, both in London and the Provinces, was very much on her shoulders at this time, for she felt the imperative need for extending them to other parts of the country, and undertook many arduous missionary journeys on their behalf during the few years that followed their establishment in London. There, as the schools grew and spread under the fostering care of the L.C.C., it was the auxiliary services of after-care, feeding and training that claimed the principal share of her attention. But she had a very efficient committee to assist her in these matters, under the chairmanship of Miss Maude Lawrence, so that gradually her responsibility for the London cripples grew less heavy, and she was able to turn to other schemes that now began to simmer in her mind for the welfare of the whole as well as the halt among London's children.

For the remarkable success of the Children's Recreation School at the Settlement, which by the year 1904 had attendances of some 1,700 children a week (all, of course, wholly voluntary), led Mrs. Ward to feel that some effort might be made to carry the civilizing effect of such centres of play into the remoter and still more squalid regions of the East and South. Already the Children's Happy Evenings' Association held weekly or fortnightly "Evenings" in some eighty or ninety schools, giving much pleasure to the children wherever they went, but Mrs. Ward's plan was for something on a more intensive scale than this, something that might exert a continuous influence over the lives of large numbers of children in any given district, as the occupations and delights of the "Passmore" did over the children of St. Pancras. She founded a small committee, in October, 1904, to go into the matter and to lay proposals before the Education Committee of the London County Council: proposals to the effect that the "Play Centres Committee" should be allowed the free use of certain schools after school hours on five evenings a week, from 5.30 to 7.30, and also on Saturday mornings, for the purpose of providing games, physical exercises and handwork occupations for the children of that district. The Council

readily gave its consent, and Mrs. Ward applied herself to the task of raising sufficient funds for the maintenance of eight "Evening Play Centres" in certain school buildings, to be carried on for a year as an experiment. She obtained promises amounting to nearly £800, largely from the same friends as had watched her work at the Settlement, and with this she felt that she could go forward. After careful inquiry, four schools in the East End were selected, with one in Somers Town and two in Lambeth and Walworth respectively, while Canon Barnett offered Toynbee Hall itself as the scene of an eighth Centre. Mrs. Ward devoted special pains to the selection of the eight Superintendents who were to have charge of these Play Centres, for she rightly felt that on their wisdom and skill in handling the large numbers of children who would pass through their hands would largely depend the success of the adventure. Gymnastic instructors, handwork teachers and many voluntary helpers were also secured and assigned to the various Centres, so that the staff in each case consisted of a *cadre* of paid and professional workers, assisted by as many volunteers as possible. Mrs. Ward's long experience at the Settlement had convinced her that this nucleus of paid workers was essential to the smooth and continuous working of any such scheme, since although the best volunteers were invaluable in supplying an element of initiative and originality in the working out of new ideas, still there was also an element of irregularity in their attendance which detracted much from their usefulness! And in proportion as the Centres succeeded in their object of attracting the children from the streets, so much the more disastrous would it be if large numbers of them were left shepherdless on foggy evenings because Miss So-and-So had a bad cold. Mrs. Ward was much criticized in certain quarters for bringing the "professional element" into her Play Centres, but she knew better than her critics how far the voluntary element might safely be trusted, and how far it must be supplemented by the professional. She was playing all the time for a *big thing*, with possibilities of expansion not only in London but in the great industrial towns as well, besides which she always hotly resented the suggestion that the paid worker must be inferior in quality to the volunteer. On the contrary, it interested her immensely to see how the

professional teachers, both men and women, would often reveal new and unsuspected qualities in the freer atmosphere of the Play Centre, while the greater intimacy that they acquired with their children was—as they often acknowledged—of the greatest value to them in their day-school work.

The first eight Play Centres opened their doors to the children on the first Monday in February, 1905, and it may be imagined with what anxiety and delight Mrs. Ward watched their development during these first weeks. The children had been secured in the first instance by invitations distributed through the Head Teachers to those who, in their opinion, stood most in need of shelter and occupation after school hours, i.e. principally to those whose parents were both out at work till 7 or 8 o'clock ; but after the ice was broken, Alf would bring 'Arry and Edie would bring Maud, till the utmost capacity of the classes was reached, and Mrs. Ward's heart was both gladdened and saddened by the tale that her staff had as many children as they could possibly cope with, and that many had of necessity been turned away. By the end of the year the weekly attendance at the eight Centres amounted to nearly 6,000, and a year later, with ten Centres instead of eight, they had risen to over 10,000. This meant that Mrs. Ward had struck upon a real need of the wandering, loafing child-population of our greatest city—a need that will in fact be perennial so long as the housing of the miles upon miles of bricks and mortar that we call the working-class districts remains what it is. "It all grows steadily beyond my hopes," wrote Mrs. Ward to Mrs. Creighton in October, 1906, "and I believe that in three or four years we shall see it developing into an ordinary part of education, in the true sense. There is no difficulty about money—the difficulty is to find the time and nerve-strength to carry it on, even with such help as Bessie Churcher's."

But the burden of raising the increasing sums required was, in truth, very great, so that Mrs. Ward, with her belief in the future of the movement, was already at work to get the Play Centre principle recognized and embodied in an Act of Parliament. The opportunity arose on Mr. Birrell's ill-fated Bill of 1906, but although Mrs. Ward's clause, enabling any Local Education Authority "to provide for children

attending a public elementary school, Vacation Schools, Play Centres, or means of recreation during their holidays or at such other times as the Local Education Authority may prescribe," was accepted by the Government, and passed the House of Lords in December, 1906, the Bill itself was dropped soon afterwards, having been wrecked on the usual rocks of sectarian passion. Fortunately, however, Mr. McKenna, who succeeded Mr. Birrell at the Board of Education, was able to carry a smaller measure, known as the Education (Administrative Provisions) Act, in the summer of the next year (1907). This Act duly contained the Play Centres clause, as well as the provisions for the medical inspection and treatment of school-children which have since borne such beneficent fruit. Already in the previous summer, when the clause was first before the House of Commons, Mr. Sydney Buxton had said at the opening of the Settlement Vacation School that he felt sure it would go down to history as the " Mary Ward Clause."

But this victory had not been won except at the cost of considerable friction with the only other body that attempted to cater in any systematic fashion for the needs of London's children in the evening hours—I mean the Children's Happy Evenings' Association. The Association, which embodied the " voluntary principle " in its purest form, could not tolerate the idea that the Public Education Authority might in the future come to encroach upon a field which they regarded as their own—even though their " Evenings " were avowedly held only once a week, sometimes only once a fortnight, and could not touch more than the barest fringe of the child population of each district. They disliked the professional worker, and they abhorred the bare idea that public money might eventually be spent upon the recreation of the children—ignoring the experience of America, where the public authority was doing more each year for the playtime of its children, and forgetting, perhaps, that at the " preparatory schools " to which their own little boys were sent, almost more time and thought were spent upon their games than upon their " education " proper. And so they sent a deputation to Mr. Birrell to oppose Mrs. Ward's clause, and their workers attacked Mrs. Ward and her precious Play Centres in other ways and on other occasions as well ; but they found that she was a shrewd fighter,

for even though during the summer of 1906 she was laid low by that most disabling complaint, a terrible attack of eczema, she compelled herself to write from her bed a trenchant letter to *The Times* in defence of the professional worker, and also a very conciliatory letter to her friend Lady Jersey, the President of the Happy Evenings' Association.

> " It is most unwelcome to me," she wrote, " this dispute over a public cause—especially when I see or dream what could be done by co-operation. What I *wish* is that you would join the Evening Play Centres Committee, and see for yourself what it means. There is nothing in our movement which is necessarily antagonistic to yours, but I think we may claim that ours is more in sympathy with the general ideas on the subject that are stirring people's minds than yours."

The affair ended in the acceptance by the Government of an amendment to Mrs. Ward's clause, authorizing the Local Education Authorities to " encourage and assist the continuance or establishment of Voluntary Agencies " in any exercise of powers under the new Act. The two associations—the Happy Evenings and the Play Centres—continued to exist side by side until the inevitable march of events led, under the stress of war, to the issue of Mr. Fisher's authoritative Memorandum (January, 1917), admitting the obligation of the State in the matter of the children's recreation, and announcing that in future the Board would undertake half the " approved expenditure " of Evening Play Centre committees. The Children's Happy Evenings' committee thereupon decided, in dignified fashion, that their work was ended, and dissolved their Association. Peace be to its ashes ! It had given joy, much joy, to many thousands of London children, as Mrs. Ward always most fully recognized, and if in the end it stood in the way of the new and younger power which was capable of giving an almost indefinite extension to the children's pleasure, could it but have a free field, the reluctance of the Association to cede any ground was only, after all, a very natural affair.

But once the new Act was passed, Mrs. Ward was to be disappointed in her hopes that the London Education Authority would take advantage of the powers conferred

upon it in order to assist the movement financially. Certain members of the Council elected in 1907 (in which the majority was overwhelmingly Moderate) urged her to present an appeal to the Education Committee, asking that the cost of the Handwork, Drill and Gymnastic classes held at the Play Centres might be defrayed by the Council; this she did in a statement which she drew up and presented in October, 1907, weaving into it with all the practised skill that she knew so well how to throw into such documents firstly a picture of the child-life of such districts as Hoxton, Walworth and Notting Dale in the winter evenings, when the children were too often "turned out after tea into the streets and told not to come home till bedtime"; then a brief account of the small beginnings and immense growth of the Children's Recreation School at the Passmore Edwards Settlement, with its offshoots, the ten Play Centres held in the London schools, and finally a striking list of individual cases, showing how the Centres had already attracted to themselves scores of boys and girls whose conditions of life were leading them into idling and vagabondage of all sorts, through the mere lack of anything to do in the dark hours.

"Perhaps the most striking revelation of the whole work," wrote Mrs. Ward, "has been the positive hunger for hand-occupation which exists among the older children. The attendances at the handwork classes drop off a little when June begins, and from June to October they are better discontinued in favour of cricket, swimming and outdoor games in general. But from October onwards through the whole winter and up to the end of May, the demand for handwork never slackens. Two or three times the number of children who are now being taught would eagerly come to classes if they were opened. Basket-work, wood-work and cobbling are unfailing delights, and it is here that we ask most earnestly for the help of the County Council. Rough boys, who would soon, if left to themselves, become on leaving school a nuisance to the community and to the police,can be got hold of through handwork, and in no other way. And when once the taste has been acquired, there remains the strong probability that after school is over they will be drawn into the net of Evening Classes and Polytechnics, and so rescued for an honest life."

But the Education Committee, burdened as it was in that year with the first arrangements for medical inspection and treatment, as well as with the demand for the feeding of necessitous children, did not feel able to undertake this further responsibility, although its reception of Mrs. Ward's memorandum was extremely sympathetic. All that the Council would do at this stage was to remit the charges previously made for cleaning and caretaking of the schools during Play Centre hours, a concession which amounted to a grant of about £20 a year per Centre.

Mrs. Ward was therefore thrown back upon her own resources for the financing of her great experiment. No thought of reduction or even of standing still could be admitted, for with the growing fame of the Centres, appeals began to come in from Care Committees, from School Managers, from Clergy, and from hard-worked Magistrates, begging that Centres might be opened in their districts, while the owner of a jam factory in South London offered to pay part of the cost of a Centre if it could be opened near his works, *because the children used to come down to the factory gates in the evenings and cry till their mothers came out.* Mr. Samuel's Children's Act of 1908 created the post of Probation Officer for the supervision of "first offenders"; the first two or three of these were appointed, on Mrs. Ward's recommendation, from among her Play Centre Superintendents, since the intimate knowledge they possessed of the children's lives gave them special qualifications for their task. It soon became the practice of all Probation Officers to refer their lawless little charges (often aged only nine or ten!) to the nearest Play Centre as "every-night children," there to forget their wild or thieving ways in the fascinations of cobbling, or wood-work, or games, or military drill. But in order to respond to these growing appeals Mrs. Ward had to undertake an ever-increasing burden of financial responsibility, as well as of organization. In 1905 the first eight Centres had cost a little over £900; in 1908, with twelve Centres and total attendances of 620,000, the bill had risen to £3,000; in 1911, with seventeen Centres and attendances of 1,170,000, it was £4,500; in 1913, with twenty Centres and attendances of 1,500,000, it was £5,700. How she succeeded in raising these large sums in addition to her efforts for the Settlement; how she

found time, on the top of her literary work and her many semi-political interests, for the close attention that she gave, week in, week out, to the progress of each individual Centre and the peculiarities of every Superintendent, will always remain a mystery. Her unconquerable optimism, which became a more and more marked trait of her character as the years went on, helped her through every crisis, while her joy in the children's happiness acted both as a tonic and a spur. Every winter she would issue her eloquent Report, sending it out with irresistible personal letters to a large number of subscribers; many a London landlord was made to stand and deliver for the children of meaner streets than those which paid him rent; many a factory owner was persuaded to follow the example of the jam-manufacturer above-mentioned. Yet when all was done there would usually remain a deficit of several hundred pounds, which must be wiped out in order to avert a bankers' strike; then Mrs. Ward would gather up all the outstanding facts of the year's work and present them in one of those remarkable letters to *The Times* of which she possessed the secret, charming the cheques for very shame out of the pockets of the kind-hearted. And thus, with incredible toil and with many moments of despair, the organization was kept going and the indispensable funds supplied; but it was a labour of Hercules, and her letters throughout these years bear witness to the exhausting nature of the task.

Once more, in 1913, Mrs. Ward hoped that the recognition of her long effort was not far off, for both Government and County Council expressed themselves, through the mouths of two distinguished leaders, as very warmly in sympathy with it. She had organized an exhibition of Play Centre hand-work at the Settlement—toy models of all sorts, baskets, dolls, needlework, cobbled boots and shoes—and invited her old friend Lord Haldane, then Lord Chancellor, and Mr. Cyril Cobb, Chairman of the Education Committee, L.C.C., to speak at the opening ceremony. Both speakers emphasized the fact that Mrs. Ward had now proved her case, and that, as Lord Haldane said, the Play Centre movement had "reached a stage in which it must be recognized as one, at least, of the elements in a national system of education, as one of the things that must come within the scope and observance of the Board of Education. Such

a movement must begin by voluntary effort. It has already reached a stage in which I hope it is going to attract a great deal of official attention." Such words could not but encourage Mrs. Ward to hope that help was near, for by that time the Board of Education had already inaugurated the system of giving aid to voluntary societies, if their aims and methods were approved, by a proportional grant on their expenditure. Yet 1913 passed away and nothing came of it. One may perhaps shrewdly suspect, in looking back, that the authorities knew well enough when a thing was a "going concern" and needed no effort of theirs to help it up the hill. Mrs. Ward was their willing horse; they continued, with the instinct of *laissez-faire* which has so often preserved the British Constitution, to let her pull her own load. But a time was at hand when *laissez-faire* and all other comfortable doctrines were to be swept away in the shock that set the whole fabric of our society reeling. The outbreak of war, which seemed at first to threaten the very existence of such things as Play Centres, was in fact to reveal and establish their necessity. After two more years of heroic effort to keep them going amid the flood of war appeals, Mrs. Ward had her reward at last in Mr. Fisher's Memorandum of January, 1917. The State had recognized the principle that in the children lay the best hope of England, and Mrs. Ward had her way. Thenceforward the Board of Education undertook to pay half the "approved expenditure" of the Evening Play Centres committee.

But the establishment and growth of the London Play Centres, heavy and exacting as was the toil that it involved, did not by any means exhaust Mrs. Ward's efforts to improve the lot of London's children during these years. In 1908 she opened two additional Vacation Schools in the East End; one in a school with a "roof-playground" in Bow, the other in an ordinary school in Hoxton.

> "On Friday I had a field-day at the Bow Vacation School," she wrote to J.P.T. in August, 1908. "The air on the roof-playground was like Margate, and the children's happiness and good-temper delightful to see. There were flowers all about, and sunny views

over East London to distant country, and round games, and little ones happy with toys, and all sorts of nice things. Downstairs a splendid game of hand-ball in the playground, and a cool hall full of boys playing games and reading. As for the Settlement, it has never been so enchanting. There are 1,150 children daily, and all the teachers say it is better than ever. The Duke's sand-heap and the new drinking-fountain are great additions. Hoxton goes to my heart! It is *too* crowded, and there is nothing but asphalt playgrounds, with no shade till late. Yet the children swarm, and when you see them sitting listlessly, doing absolutely nothing, in the broiling dirty streets outside you can't wonder. I am having the playground shelter scrubbed out with carbolic daily, lined with some flowers in pots, and filled with small tables and chairs for the little ones. They have 800 children, and we have been obliged to give extra help."

Then in the next year, besides maintaining the roof-playground, she opened another experimental Holiday-school near by for a small number of delicate and ailing children whose names were on the "necessitous" list, and who were therefore eligible for free dinners. Mrs. Ward delighted in continuing and improving the free dinners for these little waifs during the holidays, as well as in providing suitable occupations for their fingers, and it was with real pride that she returned them to their regular school at the end of the holidays, thriving, and with a record of increased weight in almost every case. But the very success of these attempts, together with the ever-increasing size and attractiveness of the Settlement Vacation School, filled her with distress at the wasted opportunities presented by the empty playgrounds of the ordinary London schools during the August holiday, for she well knew from her own experience and from that of New York, which she had closely studied,[1] that it only needed the presence of two or three active kindergarten teachers and a supply of toys and materials to attract to these open spaces all the hot and weary children from the neighbouring streets and there to make them happy.

[1] In 1907 the City Education Authority of New York had no less than 100 school playgrounds equipped and opened under its own supervision.

Her fingers itched to do it, tired though they were with so many other labours. It was not, however, till the spring of 1911 that she was able to take this work in hand, but then she addressed herself to it with all her usual energy, presenting a scheme to the L.C.C. for the "organization" of both the boys' and the girls' playgrounds at twenty-six London schools during the summer holiday. The Council met her once more with complete confidence, lending all the larger equipment required; Mrs. Ward raised a special fund of nearly £1,000, and devoted much attention to the engagement of the Superintendents for the girls' grounds and the Games Masters for the boys'. Then, just before the end of term, notices were distributed in the neighbouring schools announcing that such and such a playground would be opened for games and quiet occupations during the holidays, and the result was awaited with some quaking. Would there be a crowd or a desert? and if the former, would the Superintendents be able to keep order? The answer was not long in coming. "I let in 400 boys," wrote one of the Games Masters after his first session, "and the street outside was still black with them." But in spite of the eager crowds which everywhere made their appearance, order *was* kept most successfully. Mrs. Ward herself visited the playgrounds constantly, and at the end of the month wrote her joyous report to *The Times*:

> "Inside one came always upon a cheerful scene. In the girls' playgrounds, during those hottest August days, one saw crowds of girls and babies playing in the shade of the school buildings, or forming happy groups for reading or sewing, or filling the trestle tables under the shelters, where were picture-books to be looked at, beads to thread, paints and paper to draw with, or wool for knitting, or portable swings where the elder girls could swing the little ones in turn. Then, if you asked the schoolkeeper to pass you through a locked door, you were in the boys' playground, where balls were whizzing, and the space was divided up by a clever Superintendent between the cricket of the bigger boys—very near, often, to the real thing—and the first efforts, not a whit less energetic, of the younger ones. In one corner, also, there would be mats and jumping-stands; in another a group playing tennis with a chalked line instead of a net, while the

shelters were full, as in the girl's ground, of all kinds of quiet occupations. Management was everything. It was wonderful what a Superintendent with a real turn for the thing could make of his ground, what a hold he got upon his boys, and how well, in such cases, the boys behaved. There was a real loyalty and *esprit de corps* in these grounds ; and when, in the last week, ' sports ' and displays were organized for the benefit of the parents, it was really astonishing to see with what ease a competent man or woman could handle a crowded playground, how eagerly the children obeyed, how courteous and happy they were."

The number of attendances had been prodigious—424,000 for the whole month, or 106,000 per week—and the gratitude of the parents who had pressed in to see the final displays was touching to hear. In the next year Mrs. Ward persuaded the L.C.C. to share the experiment with her, the Council opening " organized playgrounds " in twenty schools and she herself in twenty more ; this time the organization was in many points improved, and the results still more satisfactory. But although the Council gave her to understand that they would undertake to carry on the experiment in future, being convinced of its necessity, no further action was taken, and the playgrounds of London, in spite of Mrs. Ward's object-lesson, have been suffered to relapse into that condition of uselessness and sometimes of positive danger to the children's morals from which her efforts in 1911 and 1912 had sought to rescue them.

The story of Mrs. Ward's activities for the welfare of London's children has taken us far beyond the period of her life at which we had otherwise arrived. To return briefly to her literary work, it may be said, I think, that those two novels of London life, *Lady Rose's Daughter* and *William Ashe*, had marked its highest point in sheer brilliance and success ; after these the long autumn of her novel-writing began, which, like all mellow autumns, had its moments of more true and delicate beauty than the full summer had possessed. The first of these autumn novels, if I may use the term, was *Fenwick's Career*, which appeared in May, 1906 ; it was not a great popular success, like the previous two, but to those who read it in these after-times its sober

excellence of workmanship, as shown especially in the scenes at Versailles and at the Westmorland cottage where husband and wife meet again after their long separation, are perhaps more attractive than all the brilliance of poor Kitty Bristol or of the shifting groups in Lady Henry's house in Bruton Street. Mrs. Ward had been criticized in the case of these three novels for having made use of the persons and incidents of the past without any definite acknowledgment, but she defended herself vigorously, in a short Preface to *Fenwick's Career*, in words that I cannot do better than reproduce :

> " The artist, as I hold, may gather from any field, so long as he sacredly respects what other artists have already made their own by the transmuting processes of the mind. To draw on the conceptions or the phrases that have once passed through the warm minting of another's brain, is for us moderns at any rate, the literary crime of crimes. But to the teller of stories, all that is recorded of the real life of men, as well as all that his own eyes can see, is offered for the enrichment of his tale. This is a clear and simple principle ; yet it has been often denied. To insist upon it is, in my belief, to uphold the true flag of Imagination, and to defend the wide borders of Romance."

The cottage on the " shelf of fell " in Langdale, whence poor Phœbe Fenwick set forth on her mad journey to London, had also a solid existence of its own, though no " acknowledgment " is made to it in Foreword or text. " Robin Ghyll " stands high above the road on the fell-side, between a giant sycamore and an ancient yew, close by the ghyll of " druid oaks " whence it takes its name—resisting with all the force of the mountain stone of which it is built the hurricanes that sweep down upon it from the central knot of those grim northern hills. The view from its little lawn of Pikes, Crinkle Crags and Bow Fell has perhaps no equal in the Lake District. Sunshine and storm have passed over it for 200 years or more, since the valley folk first built it as a small statesman's farm or shepherd's cottage. At the time of which I write the little place was occupied by a poetically minded resident who had added two pleasant rooms.

Mrs. Ward and her daughter Dorothy noticed Robin Ghyll as they drove up Langdale with " Aunt Fan " one

summer day in 1902, and fell in love with it. Two years later it actually fell vacant, so that Mrs. Ward could take it in the name of her daughter and share with her the joy of furnishing and then inhabiting its seven rooms. But though Mrs. Ward loved Robin Ghyll and fled to it occasionally for complete retirement, it belonged in a more particular sense to her daughter, and derived from her its charm. Thither she would go at Whitsuntide or in September, refreshing body and mind by contact with its solitudes. Not often indeed could she be spared from the absorbing life of Stocks, or Italy, or Grosvenor Place, where so much depended upon her. But though life limped at Stocks during Dorothy's brief absences, she always returned from Robin Ghyll with strength redoubled for the arduous service of love which she rendered to her mother all her life long, and from which both giver and receiver derived a sacred happiness.

CHAPTER XI

THE VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA 1908

MRS. WARD had often been assured by her friends and admirers in the United States that if she would but visit them she would find such a welcome as would stagger all her previous ideas of hospitality. She could not doubt it; it was, in fact, this thought, combined with the frailness of her health, that had deterred her during the twenty years that followed the publication of *Robert Elsmere* from going to claim the honours that awaited her. Her husband and daughter had already paid two visits to the States, and had experienced in the kindness and warmth of their reception an earnest of what would fall to Mrs. Ward's lot should she venture across the Atlantic; nor had they merely whirled with the passing show, but had made many lifelong friends. Mrs. Ward had, however, resisted the pressure of these friends for many years, until at length, in the spring of 1908, so strong a combination of circumstances arose to tempt her that her resolution gave way. Her own health, which had suffered a grievous and prolonged breakdown in 1906, had gradually re-established itself, so that by the time of which we are speaking she was perhaps in better case for such an adventure than she had been for some years. Mr. and Mrs. Whitridge would hear of nothing but that she should make their house her home during her stay in New York; Mr. Bryce made the same demand for Washington; Earl Grey for Ottawa (where he was at that time Governor-General), while Mr. Ward's acquaintance with Sir William van Horne, Chairman of the Canadian Pacific Railway—based on a common enthusiasm for Old Masters—led to the irresistible offer of a private car on the Line for Mrs. Ward and her party, at the

Company's expense, from Montreal to Vancouver and back. Such lures were hardly to be withstood, but I doubt whether Mrs. Ward would have succumbed even to them had it not been for her growing desire to see, with her own eyes, the work which was being done in New York for the play-time of the children. She knew that New York was far in advance of London in the provision of Vacation Schools for the long summer holiday, and of evening Recreation Centres for the children who had left school; but Play Centres for the school-children themselves were as yet unknown there, so that she felt much might be gained by an exchange of experiences between herself and the "Playground Association of America."

And so, on March 11, 1908, they sailed in the *Adriatic*—she and Mr. Ward, and her daughter Dorothy, with the faithful Lizzie in attendance. The great ship set her thinking of the only other long voyage that she had ever made, over far other seas. "When I look at this ship," she wrote, "and think of the cockleshell we came home in round the Horn in '56, and the discomforts my mother must have suffered with three children, one a young baby! Happiness, as we all know, and as the copy-books tell us, does not depend on luxuries—but how she would have responded to a little comfort, a little petting, if she had ever had it! My heart often aches when I think of it." The comforts of the *Adriatic* were indeed colossal, and since the ocean was kindness itself, Mrs. Ward took no ill from the voyage, but arrived in good spirits, and ready to face the New World with that zest which was her cradle-gift.

Mr. Whitridge's pleasant house in East Eleventh Street received Mr. and Mrs. Ward, while Dorothy stayed with equally hospitable friends—Mrs. Cadwalader Jones and her daughter—over the way. Avalanches of reporters had to be faced and dealt with, all craving for five minutes' talk with Mrs. Ward, but they were usually intercepted in the hall by Mr. Whitridge, whose method of dealing with his country's newspapers was somewhat drastic. If they passed this outer line of defence they were received by Mr. or Miss Ward, who found them persistent indeed, but always marvellously civil; and on the very few occasions when Mrs. Ward did consent to be interviewed, she insisted on seeing the proof and entirely re-writing what had been put

into her mouth. The newspapers, indeed, had reckoned without a mentality which intensely disliked this kind of thing; it was unfortunate, perhaps, but inevitable!

In all other respects, however, it was impossible for Mrs. Ward not to be deeply moved by the kindness that was heaped upon her. "Life has been a tremendous rush," wrote D. M. W. from New York, "but really a very delightful one, and we are accumulating many happy and amusing memories. The chief thing that stands out, of course, is the love and admiration for M. and her books. When all's said and done, it really is pretty stirring, the way they feel about her. And the things the quiet, unknown people say to one about her books go to one's heart." ("We dined at a house last night," wrote Mrs. Ward herself, "where everybody had a card containing a quotation from my wretched works. Humphry bears up as well as can be expected!") But on one occasion, at least, she came in for a puff of unearned incense. At an afternoon tea, given in her honour by Mrs. Whitridge, an elderly lady was overheard saying in awe-struck tones to her neighbour, "To think that I should have lived to shake hands with the authoress of *Little Lord Fauntleroy*!"

Dinners, lunches, receptions, operas and theatres succeeded one another in a dazzling rush, but New York knew quite well what was the main purpose of Mrs. Ward's visit, and it was fitting that the principal function arranged in her honour should have been a dinner given her at the Waldorf-Astoria by the Playground Association of America. There were 900 persons present, and when Mrs. Ward stood up to address them every man and woman in the room spontaneously rose to their feet to greet her. It was a moment that would have touched a far harder heart than hers.

> "It was very moving—it really was," she wrote to J. P. T.—"because of the evident kindness and sincerity of it. I got through fairly well, though I don't feel that I have yet arrived at the right speech for a public dinner. . . . I was most interested by the speech of the City Superintendent of Education, Dr. Maxwell, an *admirable* man, who declared hotly in my favour as to Play Centres, and has, since the dinner, given directions for the first

afternoon Play Centre for school children in New York. Isn't that jolly!

"Well, and since, we have been lunching, dining and seeing sights with the same vigour. I have been to schools and manual training centres with Dr. Maxwell, and we went through the Natural History Museum with its Director,[1] who gave us a *thrilling* time. . . . One afternoon I went down to a College Settlement and spoke to a large gathering of workers about English ways. The day before yesterday I spoke to about 900 boys and girls and their teachers, in one of their *magnificent* public schools. Dr. Maxwell took me, and asked me to speak of Grandpapa. A great many of the elder boys had read *Tom Brown* and knew all about the 'Doctor'! I enjoyed it greatly, and as to their saluting of the flag—these masses of alien children—one may say what one will, but it is one of the most thrilling things in the world, and we, as a nation, are the poorer for not having it."

Mrs. Ward had accepted four or five engagements to lecture while she was in America, in aid of her London Play Centres, and accumulated, to her intense satisfaction, the handsome sum of £250 from this source during her tour. She gave her audiences of her best—the paper already mentioned, on "The Peasant in Literature," which revealed her literary craft in its most finished form, and although she was so much the rage at the time that her admirers were not disposed to be critical, she was yet genuinely gratified by the pleasure which this paper gave, especially in so cultivated a centre as Philadelphia. Here Mrs. Ward and her daughter were the guests of Mr. and Mrs. Earle Coates, and then of the Bertram Lippincotts, in their charming house outside the town. Independence Hall gave them the proper thrill of sympathy with a "nation struggling to be free," while Mrs. Ward was delighted by the general old-world look of many of the streets, no less than by the stately river, on which, as she found to her astonishment, "the boat-crews practise for Henley." During their short stay with Mrs. Coates, Mrs. Ward made friends with Dr. Weir Mitchell, novelist and physician, and with Miss Agnes Repplier, for whom

[1] Mr. Fairfield Osborn.

she felt an instant attraction, while Dorothy sat next to a Mr. Walter Smith, and talked to him innocently about certain Modernist lectures that had been given at the Settlement in London, discovering afterwards, to her dismay, that he was a strong Catholic, and freely called in Philadelphia "Helbeck of Bannisdale." "I noticed it fell a little flat!"

From Philadelphia they moved on to Washington, to stay with their old friends the Bryces, at the hospitable British Embassy. An invitation from the President (Mr. Roosevelt) to dine with him at the White House, had already reached them. Mrs. Ward described her impressions in a long letter to her son:

"WASHINGTON,
"*April* 13, 1908.

"Everybody here has been kindness itself, and we feel that we ought to spend the rest of our days in trying to be nice to Americans in London! First, as you know, we went to the Bryces. They asked a great many people to meet us, but what I remember best is a quiet hour with Mr. and Mrs. Root, who were smuggled into an inner drawing-room away from the crowd, where one could listen to him in peace, and above all, look at him! He is, I think, the most attractive of all the Americans we have seen. He has been Secretary of State now for some years, and is evidently, like Edward Grey, absorbed in his own special work and not much concerned with current politics. His subordinates speak of him with enthusiasm, and he has a detached, humane, meditative face, with a slight flicker of humour perpetually playing over it—as different as possible from the hawk-like concentration of the New Yorkers. We have seen most of the Cabinet and high officials, and I have particularly liked Mr. Garfield, Secretary of the Interior, Mr. Metcalf, Secretary for the Navy, and Mr. Bacon, Assistant Secretary of State. Saturday's dinner at the White House was delightful, only surpassed by the little round-table dinner of eight last night at Mr. Henry Adams's, where the President took me in and talk was fast and free—altogether a memorable evening. At the White House I did not sit near the President, everything being regulated

by a comparatively strict etiquette and precedence—but after dinner he sent word that I was to sit by him in the ballroom, at the little concert which followed, and when the music was over, he and I plunged into all sorts of things, ending up with religion and theology! Last night he talked politics, socialism, divorce, large and small families, the Kaiser, Randolph Churchill, the future of wealth in this country (he wants to *lop* all the biggest fortunes by some form of taxation—pollard them like trees)—the future of marriage and a few other trifles of the same kind. He is, of course, an egotist, but an extraordinarily well-meaning and able one, with all the virtues and failings of his natural character and original bringing-up, exaggerated now and produced on what one might almost call a colossal scale, which strikes the American imagination. He honestly doesn't want a third term, and has set his mind on Taft for his successor, but it must be hard for such a man to step down from such a post into the ordinary opportunities of life. However, as he says, and apparently sincerely, 'we mustn't break the Washington tradition.'

"To-day we are going out to Mount Vernon, and to-night there is another dinner-party. Washington is a most beautiful place—the Capitol a really glorious building that any nation might be proud of, and the shining White House, with its graceful pillared front, among its flowering trees and shrubs, makes me think with shame of that black abortion, Buckingham Palace!"

It was a special pleasure to them also to see something of M. Jusserand, the French Ambassador, and his charming wife, and to renew a friendship which had endured since their early days in London. But above all it was the leaders of American politics that impressed Mrs. Ward.

"Root, Garfield, Taft," she wrote to Miss Arnold, of Fox How, "these and several others of the leading men attracted and impressed me greatly—beyond what I had expected. Indeed, I think one of the main impressions of this visit has been the inaccuracy of our common idea in England that American women of the upper class are as a rule superior to the men. It may be true among a certain section of the rich business class, but amongst

the professional, educated and political people it is not true at all."

Boston, of course, claimed Mrs. Ward on her way to Canada, and adopted her in whole-hearted fashion. She was by this time a little tired of " receptions " of five and six hundred persons, all passing before her as in a dream and shaking a hand which was never free from writer's cramp. " But the touching thing is the distance people come—one lame lady came 300 miles !—it made me feel badly—and all the Unitarian ministers for thirty miles round have been asked and are said to be coming on Tuesday next ! " When they came, Mrs. Ward enjoyed the occasion particularly, and wrote home that she had " had to make a speech, but got through better than usual by dint of talking of T. H. Green." An elderly bookseller among them, who had written to her regularly about each of her books for the last twenty years, now met her and spoke with her at last ; he went away contented. But the real delights of her stay at Boston were her visits to Harvard and Radcliffe, and her intercourse with the Nortons at Shady Hill, and with Mrs. Fields and Miss Jewett at the former's house. Here she met the fine old veteran, Mrs. Julia Ward Howe, author of the " Battle-Hymn of the Republic," who had lately brought out her memoirs. Mrs. Ward had been somewhat wickedly amused by certain passages in the latter : " Imagine Mrs. Ward Howe declaring in public that a poem of hers, which a critic had declared to be ' in pitiable hexameters ' (English, of course), was not ' in hexameters at all—it was in pentameters of my own make—I never followed any special school or rule ! ' I have been gurgling over that in bed this morning." But when they met, Mrs. Ward capitulated. " By the way, I retract about Mrs. Howe. Her book is rather foolish, but she herself is an old dear—full of fun at ninety, and adored here. She lunched with Mrs. Fields to-day *en petit comité*, and was most amusing."

The New England country, which she saw on a motor-trip to Concord and Lexington, and again on a visit which she paid to Mr. and Mrs. Henry Holt at their beautiful house overlooking Lake Champlain, fascinated her, " with its miles and miles of young woods sprung up on the soil of the slain forests of the past—its pools and lakes, its hills and dales, its glorious Connecticut river, and its myriads of

white, small wooden houses, all on a nice Georgian pattern, with shady verandahs, scattered fenceless over the open fields. There were no flowers to be seen—only the scarlet blossom of the maples in the woods."

Nor could she get away, in such an atmosphere, from the old, old problem of the separation.

"I have been reading Bancroft this morning, and shall read G. O. T. to-night. We *were* fools!—but really, I rather agree with H. G. Wells that they make too much fuss about it! and with Mr. Bryce that it was a great pity, for *them* and us, that the link was broken. So they needn't be so tremendously dithyrambic!"

It was, however, with a heart full of gratitude for the unnumbered kindnesses of her hosts that Mrs. Ward quitted American soil at the end of April and crossed over into Canada. Here her peregrinations were to be mainly under the auspices of Lord Grey, then Governor-General, and of Sir William van Horne, lord of the Canadian Pacific Railway, at whose house in Montreal she planned the details of her great journey to the West. These two revealed themselves to Mrs. Ward in characteristic fashion while she was still the guest of Sir William, at Montreal, for the Governor-General, coming over from Ottawa for the great Horse Show, stopped during his progress round the arena at the Van Horne's box, spoke to Mrs. Ward with the greatest cordiality, and there and then insisted that she must go to see the great new Agricultural College at St. Anne's, near Montreal, on their way to Ottawa the next day.

"He declared that M. could not possibly leave Canada without having seen it," wrote D. M. W., "and then said, with a laugh and a wave of his hand to Sir William, 'Ask him—*he'll* arrange it all for you!'—and passed on, leaving M. and me somewhat scared, for we had not wanted to bother Sir William about *this* journey at any rate! I could see that even he, who is never perturbed, was a little taken aback, but he said, in his quiet way, 'It can certainly be arranged,' and it *has* been!" Then, *en revanche*, the Governor-General, "being on the loose, so to speak, in Montreal, with only one and the least vigilant of his A.D.C.'s," came unexpectedly to the big evening party that the Van Hornes were giving that night—"because, as he said, 'I like Van Horne, and I wanted to see Mrs.

Ward ! ' " But, once back in Ottawa, " his family and all his other A.D.C.'s, are scolding him and wringing their hands, because he never ought to have done it ! It creates a precedent and offends 500 people, while it pleases one. Such are the joys of his position."

When the " command " journey to the Agricultural College had been safely preformed, the students duly presented Mrs. Ward with a bouquet and sang " For *she's* a jolly good fellow." " The G.G. was delighted," wrote Dorothy, " and led her out to smile her thanks, but there was fortunately no time for her to be called upon for five minutes of uplift, as His Excellency was, the last time he went there ! That has now become a household word in Government House." Mrs. Ward must, I think, almost have been in at the birth of that hard-worked phrase.

Mr. Ward had been obliged to return to England for his work on *The Times*, so that his wife's Canadian experiences are recorded in letters to him :

" Government House, Ottawa,
" *May* 14, 1908.

. . . " Well, we have had a *very* pleasant time. Lord Grey is never tired of doing kind things, and she also is charming. He has asked everybody to meet us who he thought would be interesting—Government and Opposition—Civil servants, journalists, clergy—but no priests ! The fact is that there is a certain amount of anxiety about these plotting Catholics, and always will be. They accept the *status quo* because they must, and because it would not help them as Catholics to fall into the hands of either the United States or of France. But there is plenty of almost seditious feeling about. And the ingratitude of it ! I sat last night at the Lauriers' between Sir Wilfrid and M. Lemieux, Minister of Labour—both Catholics. Sir Wilfrid said to me, ' I am a Roman Catholic, but all my life I have fought the priests—*le clêricalisme, voilà l'ennemi.* Their power in Quebec is unbounded, but Modernism will come some day—with a rush—in a violent reaction.' On my left M. Lemieux described his meeting last week in Quebec with fourteen bishops, one of whom said to him—' *Le Canada, c'est le Paradis terrestre du Catholicisme* ! ' But as for the educated

Catholics, M. Lemieux went on, 'We are all Modernists!' Both of them denounced the Pope and spoke with longing of Leo XIII."

"TORONTO,
"*May* 18.

"Such nice people at Ottawa, and such interesting people. Also the guiding ideas and influences are *English*, the first time I have felt it. The position of the Parliament buildings is splendid, and some day it will be a great city. The Archives represent the birth and future of Canadian history, and a Canadian patriotism—four years' work, and already it is influencing ideas and politics, among a young people who did not know they *had* a history.[1]

"Toronto is less exciting, though pleasant. We lunched yesterday with Colonel George Denison, a great Loyalist and Preferentialist, much in with Chamberlain. He cut Goldwin Smith twenty years ago!—so it was piquant to go on from him to the Grange. The Grange is an English eighteenth-century house, or early nineteenth—as one might find in the suburbs of Manchester in a large English garden—the remains of 1,000 acres—with beautiful trees. An old man got up to meet me, old, but unmistakably Goldwin Smith, though the black hair is grizzled—not white—and the face emaciated. But he holds himself erect, and his mind is as clear, and his eye as living, as ever—at 85. He still harps on his favourite theme—that Canada must ultimately drop into the mouth of the United States and should do so—and poured scorn on English Tariff Reformers and English Home Rulers together. Naturally he is not very popular here!"

From Toronto Mrs. Ward made a flying trip to Buffalo and Niagara, where she was shown the glories of the Falls by General Greene—a descendant of the gallant Nathaniel Greene, hero of the S. Carolina campaign of 1781. Then, returning to Toronto, she found Sir William van Horne

[1] Mrs. Ward had spent a morning in the Parliamentary Library with Mr. Martin, the librarian, delighting in his detailed knowledge of Canadian history.

and the promised private car awaiting her—not to mention the " Royal Suite " at the Queen's Hotel, offered her by the management " free, gratis, for nothing ! Oh dear, how soon will the mighty fall !—after the 12th of June next " (the date of her departure for home). But, for the present, " The car is yours," said Sir William, " the railway is yours —do exactly as you like and give your orders."

They parted from their kind Providence on Saturday, May 23, but within forty-eight hours the railway was providing them with quite an unforeseen sensation. Six hours this side of Winnipeg (where all kinds of engagements awaited her), part of the track that ran across a marsh collapsed, with the result that Mrs. Ward's and many other trains were held up for nearly twenty hours.

" Vermilion Station, C.P.R.,
" *May* 25, 1908.

" Here we are, stranded at a tiny wayside station of the C.P.R., and have been waiting *sixteen hours*, while eight miles ahead they are repairing a bridge which has collapsed in a marsh owing to heavy rain. Three trains are before us and about five behind. A complete block on the great line. We arrived here at six this morning, and here it is 9.50 p.m.

" It has been a strange day—mostly very wet, with nothing to look at but some scrubby woods and a bit of cutting. We captured a Manitoba Senator and made him come and talk to us, but it did not help us very far. Snell, our wonderful cook and factotum, being in want of milk, went out and milked a cow !—asking the irate owner, when the deed was done, how much he wanted. And various little incidents happened, but nothing very enlivening.

[*Later.*]. " Here we are at the spot, a danger signal behind us, and the one in front just lowered. Another stop ! our engine is detached and we see it vanishing to the rear. The track won't bear it. How are we going to get over !—Here comes the engine back, and the brakesman behind our car imagines we are to be pushed over, the engine itself not venturing.

" 10.5. Safely over ! The engine pushed us to the brink, and then, as it was taken off, a voice asked for

Mrs. Ward. It was the Assistant Manager of the line, Mr. Jameson, who jumped on board in order to cross with us and explain to me everything that had happened. He had been working for hours and looked tired out. But we went out to the observation-platform, he and I and Dorothy, and the *trajet* began—our train being attached to some light empty cars, and an engine in front that was pulling us over. I thought Mr. Jameson evidently nervous as we went slowly forward—we were the first train over !—but he showed us as well as the darkness allowed, the marshy place, the new bed made for the line (in the morning the rails were hanging in air and an engine and two cars went in !) and the black mud of the sink-hole pushed up into high banks—trees on the top of them—on either side by the pressure of the new filling put in—50,000 cubic yards of sand and gravel. On either side of the line were crowds of dark figures, Galician and Italian workmen, intently watching our progress. Altogether a dramatic and interesting scene ! We were all glad, including, clearly, the assistant manager, when he said, ' Now we are over it '—but there was no real danger, even if the train had partially sunk, for it was only a causeway over a marsh and not a real bridge.

" Well, it is absurd to have only a day for Winnipeg, but this accident makes it inevitable. The journey has been all of it wonderful, and I am more thrilled by Canada than words can describe ! "

After a breathless day in Winnipeg, very pleasantly spent, under the care of Mr. and Mrs. Sanford Evans, in endeavouring to overtake the engagements lost in the " sink-hole," Mrs. Ward and her daughter resumed their journey across the vast prairie, over the Rockies and the Selkirks, and down into Vancouver. On her return she thus summed up her impressions of it in a letter to " Aunt Fan " :

" Everybody was kindness itself, everywhere, and the wonderful journey across Canada and back was something never to forget. To see how a great railway can make and has made a country, to watch all the stages of the prairie towns, from the first wooden huts upwards to towns like Calgary and Regina, and the booming

prosperity of Winnipeg—to be able to linger a little in the glorious Rockies, to rush down the Fraser Cañon, which Papa used to talk to us about and show us pictures of when we were children—I thought of him with tears and longing in the middle of it—and then to find ourselves at the end beside the ' wide glimmering sea ' of the blue Pacific—all this was wonderful, a real enrichment of mind and imagination. At least it ought to be ! "

In Vancouver they were under the chaperonage of Mr. F. C. Wade, now Agent-General for British Columbia, and of Mr. Mackenzie King, the future Prime Minister, whom they had already met at Ottawa, but with whom Mrs. Ward had a far more intimate link than that, since about five years before he had come to live as a Resident at the Passmore Edwards Settlement, and had made great friends with us all. He now acted as guide, not only to the marvellous beauties of Vancouver, but also to the recesses of the Chinese quarter, where he had many friends, owing to the fact that he happened to be engaged in dealing out Government compensation for the anti-Chinese riots of the year before. Mrs. Ward was immensely interested in all the problems of Vancouver—racial, financial and political—being especially impressed by the danger of its " Americanization " through the buying up of its real estate by American capital. She stayed long enough to lecture to the Canadian Club of Vancouver in aid of Lord Grey's fund for the purchase of the Quebec battlefields as a national memorial to Wolfe, and then set her face definitely homewards. But she could not allow herself to hurry too swiftly through the Rockies, where the snow was beginning to melt and expeditions were becoming possible. From Field she drove to feast her eyes on the Emerald Lake ; from Laggan she pushed on to Lake Louise.

To T. H. W.

" BANFF,

" *June* 4, 1908.

" Since we left Vancouver we have had a delicious time, but yesterday was the cream ! We started at 8.30 from the very nice Field Hotel, on a special train, just our car and an engine, and—the car being in front—were pushed up the famous Kicking Horse Pass, on a glorious morning.

The Superintendent in charge of the Laggan division of the line came up with us and explained the construction of the new section of the line, which is to take the place of the present dangerous and costly track down the pass. At present there are no tunnels, nothing but a long hill, up and down which extraordinary precautions have to be taken. Now they are to have spiral tunnels, or rather one long one, on the St. Gotthard plan. One won't see so much, but it will be safer, and far less expensive to work.

"The beauty of the snow peaks, the lateral valleys, the leaping streams, the forests!—and the friendliness of everybody adds to the charm. At Laggan we left the car and drove up—three miles—to Lake Louise—a perfectly beautiful place, which I tried to sketch—alack! It is, I think, more wonderful than any place of the kind in Switzerland, because of the colour of the rocks, which hold the gorgeous glacier and snow-peak. We spent the day there, looked after by a charming Scotchwoman—Miss Mollison—one of three sisters who run the C.P.R. hotels about here. About 6.30 we drove down again to find Snell and George delighted to welcome us back to the car. Then we came on to Banff, sitting on the platform of the car, and looking back at a beautiful sunset among the mountains. We shall part from the Rockies with a pang! Emerald Lake and Lake Louise would certainly conjure one back again, if they were any less than 6,000 miles from home! As it is, I suppose one's physical eyes will never see them again, but it is something to have beheld them once."

At Field Mrs. Ward had met the eminent explorer, Mrs. Schäffer, who was busy collecting guides and ponies for another expedition into the unknown tracts of the Rockies. She and Mrs. Ward made great friends, and some months later the latter was delighted to receive from her photographs of a wonderful lake which she had discovered, and to which she gave the name of Lake Maligne. Mrs. Ward could not resist weaving the virgin lake into the last chapter of her story, *Canadian Born.*

When at length the long journey was over and the faithful car landed her safely at Montreal, Mrs. Ward still had one

pleasant duty to perform—the handing over of her earnings at Vancouver to Lord Grey, as a thankoffering for all the good things that had fallen to her lot since she had parted from him three weeks before. His reply delighted her, especially since she had just ended her Canadian experiences by an expedition up the Heights of Abraham, escorted by Col. Wood, the Canadian military historian.

June 12, 1908.

MY DEAR MRS. WARD,—

You are *most* kind! I have received no contribution to the Quebec Battlefields that has given me greater pleasure. I value it partly because it is yours and partly Vancouver's. Every cent that filters through from B.C. and the Prairie Provinces is a joy to me. The Canadian National Problem, the Imperial Problem, is how to link B.C. and the Western Provinces more closely with the Maritime Eastern Provinces—how to improve the transportation service, East and West, and cause the great highroad of human traffic from Europe to Asia to go viâ Montreal and Vancouver—that is the problem, and that is why I rejoice over every Western Piccanin who subscribes his few cents to Quebec. A feeling for Quebec will remain engraven on his heart for all time.

. . . I do not think the character of the debt owing in £ s. d. by the British race to the Wolfe family has ever been put before the public. Wolfe's father never could obtain the repayment from the British Government of £16,000 advanced by him during the Marlborough campaigns. The different Departments did the pass trick with him—the first rule of departmental administration—played battledore and shuttlecock with him until he desisted from pressing his claim for fear of being considered a Dun!

Then James Wolfe, our Quebec hero, never received the C. in C. allowance of £10 per day. His mother claimed £3,000 from the British Treasury as the amount owing to her son on September 13, 1759—but the poor hard-up departments played battledore and shuttlecock with her, and she, like her Wolfe relations, was too great a gentleman to press for payment. When, however, she found that James had left £10,000 to be distributed

according to the instructions of his will, and that his assets only realized £8,000, the dear good lady did try and squeeze £2,000 out of the £19,000 owing by the Government to the family, in order that she might carry out her boy's wishes—but it was a hopeless, useless effort, and the splendid dame heaped all the coals of fire she could on the heads of the stony-hearted, perhaps because stony-broke, British People, by leaving the whole of her fortune to the widows and orphans of the officers who fell under Wolfe's command at Quebec. Now I maintain that the whole Empire has a moral responsibility in this matter, for have not the most energetic of the descendants of the British People of 1759 emigrated into Greater Britain? The story of how we recompensed Wolfe for giving us an immortal example and half a continent has not, so far as I know, been told.

Delighted to think you are going back to England a red-hot Canadian missionary. Send out all the young people whom you know and believe in, and who are receptive and sympathetic and appreciative, and have sufficient imagination not to be stupidly critical. Send them all over here. We shall be delighted to see them, although I fear they cannot all get Private Cars!

If Mrs. Ward did not, on her return to England, set up altogether as an amateur emigration agent, she yet paid her debt to Canada by the delightful enthusiasm for the young country with all its boundless possibilities, combined with a shrewd appreciation of its difficulties, which she threw into her novel, *Canadian Born*. Neither Canada nor Lord Grey had any reason to complain of the devotion, both of heart and of head, which she gave to the cause. To her American friends, on the other hand, her impassioned attack in *Daphne*, or *Marriage à la Mode*, on the divorce laws of the United States, came as something of a surprise, for they had not realized, while she was with them, how deep an impression these things had made on her, or how much her artistic imagination had been captured by their tragic or sordid possibilities. *Daphne* is, indeed, little but a powerful tract, written under great stress of feeling, but the Americans missed in it the happy touch that had created Lucy Foster, and regretted that Mrs. Ward should

have felt bound to portray for their benefit so wholly disagreeable a young person as Daphne Floyd. Time has, however, brought its revenges in the strong movement that has now arisen in the United States for the unification of the widely-differing divorce laws of the various States under one Federal Law.

Yet there were deeper forces at work in the writing of *Daphne* than any which Mrs. Ward's brief visit to America alone could have accounted for. The growing disturbance which the Suffrage question was making in the currents of English life had thrown Mrs. Ward's thoughts into these channels for longer than her critics knew. *Daphne* was one result of this fermentation; another was what we should now call "direct action." Within a month after her return from America Mrs. Ward wrote to Miss Arnold of Fox How (herself an undaunted Suffragist at the age of seventy-five): "You will see from the papers what it is that has been taking all my time—the foundation of an Anti-Suffrage League."

CHAPTER XII

MRS. WARD AND THE SUFFRAGE QUESTION

MRS. WARD, as is well known, did not believe in Women's Suffrage. She had heard the subject discussed from her earliest days at Oxford, ever since the time when the first Women's Petition for the vote was brought to the House of Commons by Miss Garrett and Miss Emily Davies in 1866, and John Stuart Mill moved his amendment to the Reform Bill of 1867. But it did not greatly interest her. Her mind was set in other directions, responding to the intellectual stimulus of Oxford rather in the field of historical and religious inquiry and leading her on, as we have seen, to her memorable " revolt from awe " in the matter of the Interpretation of the Scriptures. Her group of friends at Oxford were hardly touched by the Suffrage agitation ; the movement for the Higher Education of Women, in which Mrs. Ward bore so distinguished a part, was wholly unconnected with it. Indeed it was the very success of this movement that helped to convince Mrs. Ward that the right lines for women's advance lay, not in the political agitation for the Suffrage, but in the broadening of education, so as to fit her sex for the many tasks which were opening out before it. But she had also an inborn dislike and distaste for the type of agitation which, even in those early days, the Suffragists carried on ; for the " anti-Man " feeling that ran through it, and for the type of woman —the " New Woman " as she was called in the eighties— who gravitated towards its ranks. Her scholarly mind rejected many of the Suffragist arguments as shallow and unproven, especially those which concerned the economic condition of women, while the practical co-operation between men and women that she saw all round her, both in Oxford and afterwards in London, gave her the conviction that the

remaining disabilities of women might and would be removed in due course by this road, rather than by a political turmoil which would only serve to embitter the relations between them. In her eyes women were neither better nor worse than men, but different; so different that neither they nor the State would really be served by this attempt to press them into a political machine which owed its development solely to the male sex. In later years she had many close friends in the Suffrage camp, nor did she ever lose those of her earlier days who were converted, but to the end there remained a profound antipathy between her and the "feminist" type of mind, with its crudities and extravagances—the type that was to manifest itself so disastrously in later years among the "Suffragettes." It was not that she wished her sex to remain aloof from the toil and dust of the world, as her Positivist friends would have liked; rather she felt it to be the duty of all educated women to work themselves to the bone for the uplifting of women and children less fortunate than themselves, and so to repay their debt to the community; but clamour for their own "rights" was a different thing: ugly in itself, and likely to lead, in her opinion, to a sex-war of very dubious outcome.

The first time that Mrs. Ward was drawn into the battle of the Suffrage was on the occasion, early in 1889, of Lord Salisbury's much-trumpeted conversion to it, when a Private Member's Bill[1] of the usual limited type was before Parliament, and the Prime Minister's attitude appeared to make it probable that the Bill might pass. Mrs. Creighton —then also opposed to the Suffrage, though on somewhat different grounds from Mrs. Ward's—Mr. Frederic Harrison, Mr. Knowles, and Mrs. Ward united in organizing a movement of protest. It was decided at a meeting held at Mr. Harrison's house in May that the signatures of women eminent in the world of education, literature and public service should be invited to a "Protest against the extension of the Parliamentary Franchise to Women," which Mrs. Ward had drawn up (with some assistance from Mrs. Creighton), and which Mr. Knowles undertook to publish in the next month's *Nineteenth Century*.

The arguments advanced in this *Protest* are interesting as showing the position from which Mrs. Ward hardly moved

[1] Mr. Woodall's.

in the next thirty years, though many of her original allies who signed it fell away and joined the Suffrage camp. There is first the emphasis on the essentially different functions of men and women:

"While desiring the fullest possible development of the powers, energies and education of women, we believe that their work for the State, and their responsibilities towards it, must always differ essentially from those of men, and that therefore their share in the working of the State machinery should be different from that assigned to men." Women can never share in such labours as "the working of the Army and Navy, all the heavy, laborious, fundamental industries of the State, such as those of mines, metals and railways, the management of commerce and finance, the service of that merchant fleet on which our food supply depends. . . . Therefore it is not just to give to women direct power of deciding questions of Parliamentary policy, of war, of foreign or colonial affairs, of commerce and finance equal to that possessed by men. We hold that they already possess an influence on political matters fully proportioned to the possible share of women in the political activities of England."

At the same time the recent extensions of women's responsibilities, such as their admission to the municipal vote and to membership of School Boards, Boards of Guardians, etc., is warmly welcomed, "since here it is possible for them not only to decide but to help in carrying out, and judgment is therefore weighted by a true responsibility." Then comes a denial of any widespread demand among women themselves for the franchise, "as is always the case if a grievance is real and reform necessary," and finally an argument on which Mrs. Ward continued to lay much stress in after years, that of the steady removal of the reasonable grievances of women by the existing machinery of a male Parliament.

"It is often urged that certain injustices of the law towards women would be easily and quickly remedied were the political power of the vote conceded to them; and that there are many wants, especially among working women, which are now neglected, but which the suffrage would enable them to press on public attention. We reply that

during the past half-century all the principal injustices of the law towards women have been amended by means of the existing constitutional machinery; and with regard to those that remain, we see no signs of any unwillingness on the part of Parliament to deal with them. On the contrary, we remark a growing sensitiveness to the claims of women, and the rise of a new spirit of justice and sympathy among men, answering to those advances made by women in education, and the best kind of social influence, which we have already noticed and welcomed. With regard to the business or trade interests of women—here, again, we think it safer and wiser to trust to organization and self-help on their own part, and to the growth of a better public opinion among the men workers, than to the exercise of a political right which may easily bring women into direct and hasty conflict with men."

This feeling was evidently uppermost in her thoughts at that time, for she wrote as early as January, 1889, to her sister-in-law, Miss Agnes Ward:

> "What *are* these tremendous grievances women are still labouring under, and for which the present Parliament is not likely to give them redress? I believe in them as little as I believe now in the grievances of the Irish tenant. There *were* grievances, but by the action of the parties concerned and their friends under the existing system they have been practically removed. No doubt much might be done to improve the condition of certain classes of women, just as much might be done for that of certain classes of men, but the world is indefinitely improveable, and I believe there is little more chance of quickening the pace—wisely—with women's suffrage than without it. . . . There is a great deal of championing of women's suffrage going on which is not really serious. Mr. Haldane, a Gladstonian member, said to me the other day, 'Oh, I shall vote for it of course!—with this amendment, that it be extended to married women, and in the intention of leading through it to manhood suffrage.' But if many people treat it from this point of view and avow it, the struggle is likely to be a good deal hotter and tougher before we have done with it than it has ever been yet.

"I should like to know John Morley's mind on the matter. He began as an enthusiast and has now decided strongly against. So have several other people whose opinion means a good deal to me. And as to women, whether their lives have been hard or soft, I imagine that when the danger *really* comes, we shall be able to raise a protest which will be a surprise to the other side."

In spite of the fact that the organizers of the *Protest* were handicapped by the natural reluctance of many of their warmest supporters to take part in what seemed to them a "political agitation," and so to let their names appear in print,[1] they worked to such purpose during the ten days that elapsed between the meeting at Mr. Frederic Harrison's house and the going to press of the *Nineteenth Century* that 104 signatures were secured. They were regarded by their contemporaries as the signatures either of "eminent women" or of "superior persons," according to the bias of those who contemplated the list. Posterity may be interested to know that they included such future supporters of the Suffrage as Miss Beatrice Potter (Mrs. Sidney Webb), Mrs. Creighton and Mrs. T. H. Green, while among women distinguished either through their own work or their husbands' in many fields occur the names of Mrs. Goschen, Lady Stanley of Alderley, Lady Frederick Cavendish, Mrs. T. H. Huxley, Mrs. J. R. Green, Mrs. Max Müller, Mrs. W. E. Forster, and Mrs. Arnold Toynbee.

Naturally the *Protest* drew the Suffrage forces into the field. The July number of the *Nineteenth Century* contained two "Replies," from Mrs. Fawcett and Mrs. Ashton Dilke, to which Mrs. Creighton in her turn supplied a "Rejoinder." Meanwhile a form of signature to the *Protest* had been circulated with the Review, and was supplied in large numbers on demand, so that in the August number Mr. Knowles was enabled to print twenty-seven pages of signatures to the statement that "The enfranchisement of women would be a measure distasteful to the great majority of women of the country—unnecessary—and mischievous both to themselves and to the State." Mrs. Creighton's

[1] Mr. Harrison also deprecated the formation of a definite League. "It is to do the very thing that we are protesting against," he wrote, "which is to accustom women to the mechanical artifices of political agitation."

" Rejoinder " was regarded on the Anti-Suffrage side as a dignified and worthy close to the discussion. " The question has been laid to rest," wrote Mr. Harrison to her, " for this generation, I feel sure." Nearly thirty years were indeed to pass before the question was " laid to rest," though in a different sense from Mr. Harrison's.

During the earlier part of that long period Mrs. Ward concerned herself no further, in any public capacity, with the task of opposing the Suffrage forces. Her own opinions were known and respected by her friends of whatever party, while her growing interest in and knowledge of social questions gave her an ever-increasing right to advocate them. At Grosvenor Place the talk at luncheon or dinner-table would often play round the dread subject in the freest manner, with a frequent appeal, in those happy days, to ridicule as the deciding factor. Mrs. Ward was particularly pleased with a dictum of John Morley's, " For Heaven's sake, don't let us be the first to make ourselves ridiculous in the eyes of Europe ! " which I remember hearing her quote from time to time ; but on this subject, as on all others, the atmosphere of the house was one of liberty to all comers to air and express their opinions. Most of her own family were of the Suffrage persuasion, especially her two sisters, Julia and Ethel, but her children followed her lead—save one who, being a member of a youthful debating society where the wisdom of nineteen ran riot in speech and counter-speech, was told off one day to get up the arguments in favour of Women's Suffrage and to open the debate ; she got them up with the energy of that terrible age, and remained a convert ever afterwards.

The question, in fact, did not enter the region of practical politics until the advent to power of the Liberal Government in December, 1905. It was on the occasion of Campbell-Bannerman's great meeting at the Albert Hall, before the election, that the portent of the Suffragette first manifested itself in the form of a young woman who put inconvenient questions to " C.-B.," in a strident voice, from the orchestra, and was unmercifully hustled out by indignant stewards. It was the beginning of eight years of tribulation. Mrs. Ward watched through 1906 and 1907 the growing violences of these women with mingled horror and satisfaction : horror at the unloveliness of their proceedings

and satisfaction at the feeling that an outraged public would never yield to such clamour what they had refused to yield to argument. She did not yet know the uses of democracy. But the constitutional agitation was also making way during these years, especially since it was known that Campbell-Bannerman himself was a Suffragist, and even after his death Mr. Asquith announced to a deputation of Liberal M.P.'s, in May, 1908, that if when the Government's proposed Reform Bill was introduced, an amendment for the extension of the franchise to women on democratic lines were moved to it, his Government as a Government would not oppose such an amendment. This announcement brought Women's Suffrage very definitely within the bounds of practical politics, so that those who believed that the change would be disastrous felt bound to exert themselves in rallying the forces of opposition. Mrs. Ward had hardly returned from America before Lord Cromer and other prominent Anti-Suffragists approached her with regard to the starting of a society pledged to oppose the movement. They knew well enough that no such counter-movement had any chance of success without her active support, and they shrewdly augured that, once captured, she would become the life and soul of it. Mrs. Ward groaned but acquiesced, and thus in July of this year (1908) was born the "Women's National Anti-Suffrage League," inaugurated at a meeting held at the Westminster Palace Hotel on July 21.

In the long struggle that now opened it is easy to see that Mrs. Ward was not really at her ease in conducting a movement of mere opposition and denial. She did not enjoy it as she enjoyed her battles with the L.C.C. for the pushing forward of her schemes for the children, yet she felt that it was "laid upon her" and that there was no escape. "As Gertrude says, it is all fiendish, but we feel we must do it," she wrote after the inaugural meeting; but this feeling explains her imperative desire to give a positive side to the movement by dwelling on the great need for women's work on local bodies—a line of argument which was mistrusted by many of her male supporters, one of whom, Lord James of Hereford, had spoken passionately in the House of Lords against the Act of 1907 for enabling women to sit on County or Borough Councils. But Mrs.

Ward had her way, so that when the programme of the Anti-Suffrage League came out it was found to contain twin "Objects":

(*a*) To resist the proposal to admit women to the Parliamentary Franchise and to Parliament; and

(*b*) To maintain the principle of the representation of women on municipal and other bodies concerned with the domestic and social affairs of the community.

This second "Object" was indeed the keystone of Mrs. Ward's fabric for the useful employment of the energies and gifts of women, in a manner suited to their special experience as well as conducive to the real interests of the State. She called it somewhere the "enlarged housekeeping" of the nation, and maintained that the need for women's work and influence here was unlimited, whereas in the special Parliamentary fields of foreign affairs, war and finance, women might indeed have opinions, but opinions unsubstantiated by experience and unbacked by the sanction of physical force. It is interesting to observe how she conducts her case for a "forward policy" as regards Local Government before her own supporters in the *Anti-Suffrage Review* (July, 1910):

"There is no doubt that the appointment of a Local Government Sub-Committee marks a certain new and definite stage in the programme of our League. By some, perhaps, that stage will be watched with a certain anxiety; while others will see in it the fulfilment—so far as it goes—of delayed hopes, and the promise of new strength. The anxiety is natural. For the task before the League is long and strenuous, and that task in its first and most essential aspect is a task of fight, a task of opposition. We are here primarily to resist the imposition on women of the burden of the parliamentary vote. And it is easily intelligible that those who realize keenly the struggle before us may feel some alarm lest anything should divert the energies of the League from its first object, or lest those who are primarily interested in the fight against the franchise should find themselves expected willy-nilly to throw themselves into work for which they are less fitted, and for which they care less.

"But if the anxiety is natural, the hope is natural too

Many members of the League believe that there are two ways of fighting the franchise—a negative and a positive way. They believe that while the more extreme and bigoted Suffragists can only be met by an attitude of resolute and direct opposition to an unpatriotic demand, there are in this country thousands of women, Anti-Suffragist at heart, or still undecided, who may be attracted to a positive and alternative programme, while they shrink from meeting the Suffragist claim with a simple 'No.' Their mind and judgment tell them that there are many things still to be done, both for women, and the country, that women ought to be doing, and if they are asked merely to acquiesce in the present state of things, they rebel, and will in the end rather listen to Suffragist persuasion and adopt Suffragist methods. But the recent action of the executive opens to such women a new field of positive action—without any interference with the old. How immeasurably would the strength of the League be increased, say the advocates of what has been called 'the forward policy,' if in every town or district, where we have a branch, we had also a Local Government Committee, affiliated not to the present W.L.G.S., which is a simple branch of the Suffrage propaganda, but to the Women's National Anti-Suffrage League! The women's local government movement, which has been almost killed in the last two years by Suffragist excesses and the wrath provoked by them in the nation, would then pass over into the hands of those better able to use without abusing it. Anti-Suffrage would profit, and the nation also."

Mrs. Ward looked forward, indeed, to the regular organization of women's work and influence on these lines, culminating in the election, by the women members of local bodies, of a central committee in London which would inevitably acquire immense influence on legislation as well as administration in all matters affecting women and children. "Such a Committee," she said to an American audience in 1908, "might easily be strengthened by the addition to it of representatives from those government offices most closely concerned with the administration of laws concerning women and children; and no Government, in the case of any new Bill before the House of Commons, could possibly afford to ignore the strongly expressed opinion of such a

committee, backed up as it could easily be by agitation in the country. In this way, it seems to me, all those questions of factory and sanitary legislation, which are now being put forward as stalking-horses by the advocates of the franchise, could be amply dealt with, without rushing us into the dangers and the risks, in which the extension of the suffrage to women, on the same terms as men, must ultimately land us."

This passage shows very clearly Mrs. Ward's belief in the duty of educated women to work for their fellows. She did not by any means wish them to sit at home all day with their embroidery frames, but looked forward instead to the steady development of what she called women's " legitimate influence " in politics—the influence of a sane and informed opinion, working in collaboration with Parliament, which should not only remove the remaining grievances and disabilities of women, but hold a watching brief on all future legislation affecting their interests. Decidedly Mrs. Ward was no democrat. She was willing to wear herself out for Mrs. Smith, of Peabody Buildings, and her children, but she could not believe that it would do Mrs. Smith any good to become the prey of the political agitator.

Her activity in carrying on the Anti-Suffrage campaign from 1908 to 1914 was astonishing, considering how heavily burdened she was at the same time with her literary work and with the constant pressure of her Play Centres and Vacation Schools. She was practically the only woman speaker of the first rank on her own side, except for the rare appearances in public of Miss Violet Markham, so that the Branches of the Anti-Suffrage League formed in the great towns were all anxious to have her to speak, and she felt bound to accept a certain number of such invitations. She went to Birmingham, Manchester and Sheffield in 1909 ; she led a deputation to Mr. Asquith in 1910 and another at a more critical moment in December, 1911 ; she wrote a series of articles in the *Standard* on " The Case against Women's Suffrage " in October, 1911, besides carrying on an active correspondence in *The Times*, as occasion arose, against Lady Maclaren, Mrs. Fawcett, or Mr. Zangwill ; she spoke at Newcastle, Bristol and Oxford early in 1912, and at a great meeting in the Queen's Hall, just before the fiasco of the Liberal Reform Bill, in January, 1913. At all these

meetings the prospect of Suffragette interruptions weighed upon her like a nightmare. The militant agitation was, however, a very potent source of reinforcement to the Anti-Suffrage ranks throughout this period, so that although Mrs. Ward groaned as a citizen at every new device the Militants put forth for plaguing the community, she rejoiced as an Anti-Suffragist. The most definite annoyance to which she herself was subjected by the Suffragettes occurred at Bristol, where she addressed a huge meeting in February, 1912, in company with Lord Cromer and Mr. Charles Hobhouse, M.P. A devoted lady had found a place of concealment among the organ-pipes behind the platform, from which post of vantage, as the *Bristol Times* put it, "she heard an excellent recital of music at close quarters, and for a few minutes addressed a vast meeting in a muffled voice which uttered indistinguishable words." She and a number of her fellows were ejected after the usual unhappy scrimmage, and Mrs. Ward and Mr. Hobhouse were allowed to proceed. But whether in consequence of this or as a mere coincidence, the Bristol Branch became one of the strongest of the League's off-shoots, devoting itself, to Mrs. Ward's intense satisfaction, to much useful work on local and municipal bodies.

Her opposition to Mrs. Fawcett's organization was, of course, conducted on very different lines from this. Quite early in the campaign, in February, 1909, a debate was arranged to take place at the Passmore Edwards Settlement (under the auspices of the St. Pancras Branch of the Women's Suffrage Society) between the two protagonists, Mrs. Ward and Mrs. Fawcett. The organizers of the meeting were besieged with applications for seats. Mrs. Ward reserved 150 for herself and the Anti-Suffrage League, while about 300 went to the Suffrage Society, so that the voting was a foregone conclusion; but the debate itself reached a high level of excellence, though it suffered from the usual fault which besets such tournaments—that the champions did not really *meet* each other's arguments, but cantered on into the void, discharging their ammunition and returning gracefully to their starting-points when time was called.

"Surely," wrote Mrs. Ward afterwards to her old friend, Miss McKee, the Chairman of the St. Pancras

> Suffrage Society, "surely you don't think that Mrs. Fawcett answered my main contentions! Does anyone deny the inequality of wage?—but what Mrs. Fawcett never attempted to prove was how the vote could affect it. And why compare doctor and nurse? Does not the doctor pay for a long and costly training, while the nurse is paid her living at least from the beginning? Would it not have been fairer to compare woman doctor with man doctor, and then to show that under the L.C.C. at the present moment medical appointments are open to both women and men, and the salaries are equal?"

It could not be expected that such combatants would influence each other, but Mrs. Ward's campaign went far to influence the doubting multitude, torn by conflicting counsels, harassed by the Militants, worried by accounts of prison tortures suffered by the "martyrettes," and generally bothered by the obscuring of the good old fight between Liberals and Tories which the importation of the Suffrage into every by-election caused. The Suffrage battle was indeed waged upon and around the vile body of the Liberal Party in a very special degree from 1908 to 1914, for Mr. Asquith was Prime Minister, and Mr. Asquith—encouraged thereto by every device of provocation and exasperation which the Militants could spring upon him—was an Anti-Suffragist. Yet the influence of his Suffragist colleagues and of the constitutional agitation throughout the country was sufficient to induce him, in November, 1911, to give a very favourable answer to a deputation introduced by Mrs. Fawcett, who put to him a series of questions with regard to the Reform Bill announced by the Government for the Session of 1912 and the possibility of adding Suffrage amendments to it. The Suffragists withdrew with high hopes of a real measure of enfranchisement in the ensuing year. But less than a month later Mr. Asquith was receiving a similar deputation from the Anti-Suffrage League, introduced by Lord Curzon and including Mrs. Ward, Miss Violet Markham and Mr. McCallum Scott. His reply showed unmistakably that he was exceedingly glad to have his hands strengthened by the "Antis" in his own domestic camp, and he only begged them to carry on their crusade with the utmost vigour, since "as an individual I am in entire agreement with you that the grant of the

parliamentary suffrage to women in this country would be a political mistake of a very disastrous kind."

When the Session of 1912 opened it was evident that very strong influences were at work within the walls of Parliament for the defeat of the "Conciliation Bill," which was due to come up for Second Reading at the end of March, and it is significant that Mrs. Ward was able to say, at a meeting of the Oxford Branch of the Anti-Suffrage League held on March 15, that "Woman Suffrage is in all probability killed for this Session and this Parliament." The prophecy was partly fulfilled; like the prayers of Homer's heroes, Zeus "heard part, and part he scattered to the winds." At any rate, in the Session of 1912, not only was the Conciliation Bill defeated on March 28, by fourteen votes (after its very striking victory the year before), but the Suffrage amendments to the Reform Bill never even came up for consideration. At the very end of a long Session, that is in January, 1913, the Speaker ruled that the Bill had been so seriously altered by the amendments regarding male franchise already passed that it was not, in fact, the same Bill as had received Second Reading, while there were also "other amendments regarding female suffrage" to come which would make it still more vitally different. For these reasons he directed the withdrawal of the Bill. The fury of the Suffragists at the "trick" which had been played them may be imagined, but apart from the sanctity of Mr. Speaker's rulings I think it is evident that the lassitude and discouragement about the Suffrage which pervaded the House of Commons at that time, and which contributed to the withdrawal of the Bill, was largely due to the recognition that there *was* a considerable body of Anti-Suffrage opinion in the country, both amongst men and women, the strength of which had not been realized before Mrs. Ward began her campaign. Well might she draw attention to this at a great meeting held at the Queen's Hall on January 20, when it was still expected that the Suffrage amendments would be moved:

"Naturally, I am reminded as I stand here, of all that has happened in the four and a half years since our League was founded. All I can tell you is, that we have put up a good fight; and I am amazed at what we have been able to

do. Just throw your minds back to 1908. The militant organization was fast over-running the country; the cause of Women Suffrage had undoubtedly been pushed to the front, and for the moment benefited by the immense advertisement it had received; our ears were deafened by the noise and the shouting; and it looked as though the Suffrage might suddenly be carried before the country, the real country, had taken it seriously at all. The Second Readings of various Franchise Bills had been passed, and were still to be passed, by large majorities. There was no organized opposition. Suffragist opinions were entrenched in the universities and the schools, and between the ardour of the Suffragists and the apathy of the nation generally the situation was full of danger.

"What has happened since? An opposition, steadily growing in importance and strength, has spread itself over the United Kingdom. Men and women who had formerly supported the Suffrage, looked it in the face, thought again and withdrew. Every item in the Suffragist claim has been contested; every point in the Suffragist argument has been investigated, and, as I think, overthrown. It is a great deal more difficult to-day than it was then to go about vaguely and passionately preaching that votes will raise wages in the ordinary market—that nothing can be done for the parasitic trades and sweated women without the women's vote—for what about the Trade Boards Bill? or that nothing can be done to put down organized vice without the women's vote—for what about the Criminal Law Amendment Bill? or that nothing can be done to help and protect children, without women's votes—for what about the Children's Act, the First Offenders' Act, the new Children's Courts and the Children's Probationary Officers, the vast growth of the Care Committees, and all their beneficent work, due initially to the work of a woman, Miss Margaret Frere?

"Witness, too, the increasing number of women on important Commissions: University—Divorce—Insurance; the increasing respect paid to women's opinions; the strengthening of trade unionism among women; the steady rise in the average wage.

"No, the Suffragist argument that women are trampled on and oppressed, and can do nothing without the vote, has

crumbled in their hands. It had but to be examined to be defeated.

"Meanwhile, the outrages and the excitement of the extreme Suffragist campaign gave many people pause. Was it to this we were committing English politics? Did not the whole development throw a new and startling light on the effect of party politics—politics so exciting as politics are bound to be in such a country as England—on the nerves of women? Women as advisers, as auxiliaries, as the disinterested volunteers of politics, we all know, and as far as I am concerned, cordially welcome. But women fighting for their own hands—fighting ultimately for the political control of men in men's affairs—women in fierce and direct opposition to men—that was new—that gave us, as the French say, furiously to think!

"And now, the coming week will be critical enough, anxious enough; but we all know that if any Suffrage amendment is carried in the House, it can only be by a handful of votes—none of your majorities of 160 or 170 as in the past.

"And our high *hope* is that none will pass, that every Suffrage amendment will be defeated.

"That state of things is the exact measure of what has been done by us, the Anti-Suffrage party, to meet the Suffragist arguments and to make the nation understand what such a revolution really means—though I admit that Mrs. Pankhurst has done a good deal! It is the exact measure of the national recoil since 1908, and if fortune is on our side next week, we have only to carry on the fight resolutely and steadily to the end in order finally to convince the nation."

After the collapse of the Government Reform Bill just described, the deadlock in the Parliamentary situation as regards Women's Suffrage continued right down to the outbreak of the War. Mrs. Fawcett transferred the allegiance of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies to the Labour Party, the only party which was prepared to back the principle of women's votes through thick and thin; the Militants continually increased in numbers, agitatiion and violence, and Mrs. Ward and her friends concentrated their energies more and more on the positive

side of their programme, that is on the active development of women's work in Local Government. But it was a heavy burden. Mrs. Ward felt, as she said in a speech at Oxford in 1912, that "it is a profound saying that nothing is conquered until it is replaced. Before the Suffrage movement can be finally defeated, or rather transformed, we who are its opponents must not only have beaten and refuted the Suffrage argument, but we must have succeeded in showing that there is a more excellent way towards everything that the moderate Suffragist desires, and we must have kindled in the minds, especially of the young, hopes and ideals for women which may efface and supersede those which have been held out to them by the leaders of the Suffrage army."

Her artistic imagination was already at work on the problem, for in 1913 she wrote her Suffrage novel, *Delia Blanchflower*, in which the reader of to-day may still enjoy her closely observed study of the militant temperament, in Gertrude Marvell and her village followers, while on Delia herself, an ardent militant when the story opens, the gradual effect is traced of the English traditions of quiet public service, as exemplified—naturally!—in the person of the hero. Incidentally it may here be remarked that Mrs. Ward always believed that her Anti-Suffrage activities, culminating in the writing of this novel, had a markedly bad effect on the circulation of her books. Certainly she was prepared to suffer for her opinions, for the task of diverting and of carrying forward the Women's Movement into other lines than those which led to Westminster was one that was to wear her out prematurely, though her gallant spirit never recognized its hopelessness.

Her organized attempt to give effect to these aspirations, in the foundation (early in 1914) of the "Joint Advisory Council" between Members of Parliament and Women Social Workers, arose out of the stand which she made within the National Union of Women Workers[1] for the neutrality of that body on the Suffrage question. The National Union was bound by its constitution to favour "no one policy" in national affairs, and many moderate Suffragists agreed with Mrs. Ward that sufficient *ad hoc* Societies existed already for carrying on the Suffrage campaign, and that it would have been wiser for the National

[1] Now the National Council of Women.

Union to remain aloof from it altogether. But the feeling among the rank and file of the Union was too strong for the Executive, so that in the autumn of 1912 a Suffrage resolution was passed and sent up to the Prime Minister and all Members of the House of Commons. Mrs. Ward protested, but suspended her resignation until the next Annual Conference, which met at Hull in October, 1913. There Mrs. Ward's resolutions were all voted down by the Suffragist majority, so that she and some of her friends felt that they had no choice but to secede from the Union, on the ground that its original constitution had been violated. They drew up and sent to the Press a Manifesto in which the following passage occurred:

"Under these circumstances it is proposed to enlarge and strengthen the protest movement, and to provide it, if possible, with a new centre and rallying-point for social work involving, probably, active co-operation with a certain number of Members of Parliament, who, on wholly neutral ground from which the question of Suffrage, for or against, has been altogether excluded, desire the help and advice of women in such legislation."

Mrs. Ward had, throughout the controversy, carried on an active and most amicable correspondence with her old friend, Mrs. Creighton, the President of the National Union of Women Workers, who had for some years been a convert to Women's Suffrage, on the ground that, since women had already, for good or ill, entered the political arena with their various Party Associations, it would be more straightforward to have them inside than outside the political machine. Mrs. Ward now wrote to tell her of the progress of her idea for a "Joint Advisory Committee":

"Stocks,

"*December* 18, 1913.

. . . "The scheme has been shaping beyond my hopes, and will I hope, be ready for publication before Parliament meets. What we have been aiming at is a kind of Standing Committee composed equally of Members from all parts of the House of Commons, and both sides of the Suffrage question—and women of experience in social work. I do not, I hope, at all disguise from myself the

difficulties of the project, and yet I feel that it *ought* to be very useful, and to develop into a permanent adjunct of the House of Commons. From this Joint Committee the Suffrage question will be excluded, but it will contain a dozen of the leading Suffragists in the House, which ought, I think, to make it clear that it is no *Anti* conspiracy!—but a bona-fide attempt to get Antis and Pros to work together on really equal terms."

She was much gratified by the cordial response to her invitation on the part of M.P.'s of all shades of opinion, while some seventy women—both Suffragists and "Antis"—representing every field of social work, presently joined the Committee. Naturally the reproach levelled against it by those who did not believe in it was that the Committee was wholly self-appointed, but Mrs. Ward replied that, self-appointed or not, it was an instrument for *getting things done*, and that it would soon prove its usefulness. Under the Chairmanship of Sir Charles Nicholson, M.P., the Committee had held four meetings at the House of Commons between April and July, 1914, and had got through a great deal of practical work in the drafting of various amendments to Bills then before the House, when the curtain was rung down on all such fruitful and peaceable activities. Henceforth the guns were to speak, and such things as the education of crippled children, or the pressing of a wider qualification for women members of local bodies, were to disappear within the shadow that fell over the whole country. So at least it appeared at the time, but the Joint Advisory Council, like all really practical bodies, survived the shock, and lived to devote to the special questions arising from the War the experience gained in these first meetings.

The last act in the drama of Women's Suffrage found Mrs. Ward, as usual, active and on the alert, and still unconvinced of the necessity for the measure, or, still more, of the competence of the Parliament of 1917 to deal with it. It will be remembered that the question arose again on the "Representation of the People Bill" which the Government felt bound to bring in before the death of the existing Parliament in order to remedy the crying injustices of registration which deprived most of the fighting men and

many of the munition workers of their votes. The opportunity was seized by the Suffragists to press the claims of women once more upon Parliament and public, and this time the response was overwhelmingly favourable. The pluck and endurance shown by women in all the multifarious activities of the War had brought the public round to their side ; the men at the front were believed to be in favour of it, the militant outrages had ceased, and, last but not least, there was now a lifelong Suffragist at the head of affairs. The Speaker's Conference, which reported on January 27, 1917, decided " by a majority " that " some measure of women's suffrage should be conferred." It was evident that the current of opinion was setting strongly in favour of the women's claim, but Mrs. Ward still felt it to be her duty to protest, and to organize the latent opposition which certainly existed in the country. She wrote an eloquent letter to *The Times* in May, pointing out the obvious truth that the country had not been consulted, that the existing Parliament had twice rejected the measure and was now a mere rump, with some 200 Members absent on war service ; she denied in a passage of great force the plea based on " equality of service " between men and women, appealing to the grave-yards in France and Flanders which she had seen with her own eyes, as evidence of the eternal *in*equality, and finally she pleaded for a large extension of the women's *municipal* vote, in order to provide an electorate which might be consulted by Referendum. The Referendum was in fact adopted by the now dwindling Anti-Suffrage party in Parliament as their policy ; but the House of Commons would have none of it, and the Second Reading of the Bill, which included the Suffrage clause, was carried by 329 to 40. It is obvious, of course, that in an elective Assembly, when the members are once convinced that a large increase in the electorate is about to be made, anxiety for their seats will make them very chary of voting against the new electors. Hence Mrs. Ward had to bewail many desertions. The Bill was finally passed by the House of Commons on December 7 ; but there still remained the Lords. Here the opposition was likely to be far more formidable, for the Lords had no hungry electors waiting for them, nor were they so susceptible as the Lower House to waves of sentiment such as that which had overspread press

and public in favour of Women's Suffrage. It was here, therefore, that Mrs. Ward organized her last resistance. The January *Nineteenth Century* appeared with an article by her entitled "Let Women Say," appealing to the Lords to insist on a Referendum, while in the first week of January she (acting as Chairman of the National League for Opposing Women's Suffrage) issued a Memorial to which she had obtained the signatures of about 2,000 women war-workers, and sent it to the press and to the Members of the House of Lords.

Lord Bryce wrote to her in response (January 8, 1918):

"My dear Mrs. Ward,—

Thank you for your admirable article and for the copy of the Memorial, an effective reply to that of the Suffragist ladies. It is an achievement to have secured so many signatures so quickly—and this may be used effectively by Lord Balfour of Burleigh, when he moves his Referendum Amendment. No one can yet predict the result. Lord Loreburn will move the omission of the earlier part of Clause IV to-morrow; and I suppose that if it is defeated the Referendum issue will come next."

There were a large number of distinguished Peers, including Lords Loreburn, Weardale, Halsbury, Plymouth, and Finlay, who were pledged to oppose "Clause IV," but the rock on whom the Anti-Suffragists chiefly relied was Lord Curzon. He was President of the National League for Opposing Woman Suffrage. He was an important member of the Government. His advice would sway the votes of large numbers of docile Peers. He had, however, sent Mrs. Ward a verbal message through her son, whom he met in the House on December 18, that his position in the Government would make it impossible for him to *vote* against the Clause: he would be obliged to abstain. Still he continued in active communication with Mrs. Ward, giving advice on the tactics to be pursued, and on December 30, 1917, wrote her a letter in which, after expressing admiration for her *Nineteenth Century* article, he added the words: "A letter (if possible with the article) to the Peers a few days before the Clause comes under consideration may bring up a good many to vote, and after all that is what you want for the moment."

Lord Curzon gave no further warning to the Committee of the League that he intended to pursue any different line of action from that recommended here. It was still a question of "bringing the Peers up to vote," though the Committee knew by this time that his own vote—on the formal ground of his being Leader of the House of Lords—could not be given against the Clause. What, then, was their astonishment, when on the decisive day, January 10, 1918, after a speech in which Lord Curzon condemned the principle of Women's Suffrage in unmeasured terms and announced that his opposition to it was as strong as ever, he then turned to their Lordships and advised them not to reject the Clause because it would lead to a conflict with the other House "from which your Lordships would not emerge with credit." The effect of the appeal was decisive; the Clause passed the House of Lords by a majority of sixty-three.

Thus fell the Anti-Suffrage edifice, and Mrs. Ward and her friends were left to nurse their wrath against their leader. A somewhat lengthy correspondence in the *Morning Post* followed, the echoes of which have long since died away, and Mrs. Ward retired soon afterwards to Stocks. Thence she wrote to Mrs. Creighton, on March 14, her little valediction on the Suffrage question:

> "Yes, I have had rather a bad time of headache and weariness lately. The last lap of the Suffrage struggle was rather too much for me. But I felt bound, under all the circumstances (I should not have felt bound if the decision had been postponed till after the War) as a patriot—or what I conceive to be a patriot—to fight to the end, and I actually drafted the last amendment on which the House of Lords voted. Well now, thank goodness, it is over, for a while, though I see Mrs. Fawcett is still proposing to go on. Now the question is what the women will do with their vote. I can only hope that you and Mrs. Fawcett are right and that I am wrong."

Nine months later, the General Election of December, 1918, gave women the opportunity of echoing their Prime Minister's sentiments that the Kaiser should be brought to trial and that Germany should pay for the cost of the War. Mrs. Ward did not record her vote, for purely local reasons, but she had by this time adopted an attitude of quite

benevolent neutrality on the merits of the question. She had fought her fight squarely and openly, and had finally been defeated by a combination of circumstances to which no combatant need have been ashamed of succumbing. To some of those who worked with her and who watched her endless consideration for friend and foe alike, in office and committee-room, who admired the breadth and versatility of her mind and who shared her belief in the " alternative policy " for which she so eloquently pleaded, it seemed that the failure of the Anti-Suffrage campaign lay at the door of those who obstructed her within her own walls, who could not understand her call to women to be up and doing, and who opposed a mere blind *No* to the youth and hope of the Suffrage crusade.

Be that as it may, Mrs. Ward had no reason, in looking back, to be otherwise than proud of her contribution to the great cause of women's work and freedom in this country. From her earliest days she had forwarded the cause of women's education. As her experience of life grew ever richer and more pitiful she had pleaded with her sex, using all her varied gifts of pen and speech, to give themselves, each in her degree, to the service of her fellows, and of the children. Her own example was never lacking to enforce the plea. Service, not " rights," was in effect her watchword. If she disbelieved in the efficacy of the vote to achieve miracles, it was because she believed far more in the gradual growth and efficacy of spiritual forces. The rule of the mob did not attract her, especially if it were a female mob ; she would have offered it, instead, its fill of work and service. Perhaps it was too austere a gospel for our day, and in the end she watched her country choose the opposite path without bitterness, and even with some degree of hope. At any rate she had done her part in laying before her countrywomen a different ideal.

CHAPTER XIII

LIFE AT STOCKS, 1908–1914 — *THE CASE OF RICHARD MEYNELL*—THE OUTBREAK OF WAR

STOCKS, during the first sixteen years that Mrs. Ward inhabited it, was a dear but provoking house. Built in 1772 by the Duncombe family, at the expense of the earlier manor-house at the foot of the hill, it had been added to in the mid-nineteenth century in a spirit of small economy, so that the visitor as he drove up beheld an unlovely eastern side, with a squalid porch jutting out into the drive and a mean little block of "bachelors' rooms" joined on to the main Georgian building. Though Mrs. Ward loved the southern and western sides of the house, the eastern side was always an offence to her; she longed to tear down the porch and to plan some simple scheme for unifying its whole aspect. After many hesitations, the plunge was finally made in 1907. The family retired to Stocks Cottage, the little house among the steep hanging woods of Moneybury Hill where the Neville Lytteltons had stayed so many summers, and thence watched the slow disintegration and rebuilding of the "big house." For, of course, once the process was begun, three-quarters of the Georgian structure was found to be in a state of decomposition, with floors and ceilings that would have crumbled at another touch, so that long before it was finished the visit to America had come and gone and the Anti-Suffrage campaign was launched. When at length the new Stocks could be inhabited, in the autumn of 1908, the alterations were beautiful indeed, but had been expensive. There was thenceforward an unknown burden in the way of upkeep which at times oppressed even Mrs. Ward's buoyant spirit.

And yet how she loved every inch of the place—house and garden together—especially after this rebuilding, which

stamped it so clearly as her and her husband's twin possession. Whether in solitude or in company, Stocks was to her the place of consolation which repaid her for all the fatigues and troubles of her life. Not that she went to it for rest, for the day's work there was often harder than it was in London, but the little walks that she could take in the intervals of work, down to the kitchen-garden, or up and down the lime-avenue, or through the wood behind the house, brought refreshment to her spirit and helped her to surmount the labours that for ever weighed upon her. Here it was that the near neighbourhood of her cousins of "Barley End"—Mr. and Mrs. Whitridge in summer and Lord and Lady Sandhurst in winter—meant so much to her, for they could share these brief half-hours of leisure and give her, in the precious intimacy of gossip, that relaxation which her mind so sorely needed. Then, in summer, there were certain spots in the long grass under the scattered beeches where wild strawberries grew and multiplied; these gave her exquisite delight, bringing back to her the hungry joys of her childhood, when she would seek and find the secret strawberry-beds that grew on the outcrop of rock in Fox How garden. But the more sybaritic delights of Stocks were very dear to her too—the scent of hyacinths and narcissus that greeted her as she entered the house at Christmas-time, or the banks of azalea placed there by Mr. Keen, the incomparable head-gardener. Keen had already been at Stocks for fifteen years before we came to it in 1892, and he lived to gather the branches of wild cherry that decked his mistress's grave in 1920. In summer he would work for fifteen hours a day, in spite of all that Mrs. Ward could say to him; his simple answer was that he could not bear to see his plants die for lack of watering. So Keen toiled at his garden, and Mrs. Ward toiled at her books, her speeches and her correspondence, each holding for the other the respect that only the toilers of this world can know.

Her habits of work when she was settled at Stocks were somewhat peculiar, for method was not her strong point, and it often seemed as though the day's quota was accomplished in a series of rushes rather than in a steady approach and fulfilment. No breakfast downstairs at 8.30 and then a solid morning's work for her, but a morning beginning

often at 5.30 a.m., with the reading of Greek, or writing of letters, or much reading, for the reading of many books was still her greatest solace and delight. "For reading, I have been deep in Emile Faguet's *Dix-huitième Siécle*," she wrote to Mrs. Creighton in August, 1908, "comparing some of the essays in it with Sainte-Beuve, the reactionary with the Liberal; reading Raleigh's Wordsworth, and Homer and Horace as usual. If I could only give three straight months to Greek now I should be able to read most things easily, but I never get time enough—and there are breaks when one forgets what one knew before."

Greek literature meant more and more to her as the years went on, and though she could give so little time to it, the half-hour before breakfast which she devoted, with her husband, to Homer, or Euripides, or the *Agamemnon*, became gradually more precious to her than any other fraction of the day. She was of course no scholar, in the ordinary sense, and her "quantities" both in Greek and Latin frequently produced a raucous cry from her husband, to whom the correct thing was, somehow, second nature; but the literary sense in her responded with a thrill both to the glories and the restraints of Greek verse, so that such a passage as Clytemnestra's description of the beacons moved her with a power that she could hardly explain to herself. The influence which Greek tragedy had obtained upon her thought is well seen in the opening chapter of *Diana Mallory*.

Then, at eight o'clock, would come breakfast and post, and, with the post, the first visits from the rest of us and the planning of the day's events. Usually she did not appear downstairs till after ten, and if, as so often happened, there were friends or relations staying in the house she would linger talking with them for another half-hour before disappearing finally into her writing-room. Then there would be a short but intensive morning's work—sometimes wasted on Anti-Suffrage, as she would wrathfully confess!—lunch and a brief interval for driving on the Common or in Ashridge Park, after which work would begin again before four o'clock and continue, with only a nominal break for tea, till well after eight. She rarely returned to her task after dinner, for this would infallibly bring on a bad night, and indeed the long spell in the afternoon left her

with little energy for anything but talk or silence in the evening.

Such, in approximate outline, was her day when nothing from outside caused an unusual interruption, but life at Stocks seemed often fated to consist of interruptions. First and foremost there might be guests in the house, who must be taken for a picnic on the Ivinghoe Downs or on Ringshall Common, or else there might be visitors from town on business—the Warden of the Settlement, an American publisher, a theatrical manager; telegrams would come up the drive from the little village post-office (for the telephone was not installed till 1914), while always and ever there was the tyranny of the post. One Sunday the contribution of Stocks to the village post-bag was duly certified at eighty-five letters, while forty to fifty was a very usual number. The evening post left at 6.30, and not till this was out of the way could Mrs. Ward enjoy that fragment of the day which she regarded as the best for real work, when letters and all other interruptions were cleared from the horizon. Her sitting-room was always a mass of papers, wonderfully kept in order by Dorothy or Miss Churcher; but in spite of the neatness of the packets, there would come days when the one letter or sheet of manuscript that she wanted could *not* be found, and the house would resound with the clamour of the searchers. Indeed Mrs. Ward could never be trusted to keep her small possessions, unaided, for very long, for being entirely without pockets she was reduced to the inevitable "little bag," which naturally spent much of its time down cracks of chairs and in other occult places. When her advancing years made spectacles necessary for reading and writing, these added another complication to life, but fortunately there was always some willing slave at hand to aid in recovering the lost—or rather her family would half unconsciously arrange their days so that there should be some one. Once she declared with pride to a friend that she had travelled home *alone* from Paris to London without mishap, but on inquiry it was found that "alone" included the faithful Lizzie, and only meant that, for once, neither husband nor daughter had accompanied her.

Her letters to Mrs. Creighton during these years give many glimpses of her life.

"I am writing to you very early in the morning—

6.30—," she wrote on August 4, 1910, "a time when I often find one can get a *real* letter done, or a difficult bit of work. These weeks since the middle of June have been unusually strenuous for me. Anti-Suffrage has been a heavy burden, especially the effort to give the movement a more constructive and positive side. Play Centres have been steadily increasing, and there were three Vacation Schools to organize. The Care Committees under the L.C.C. are beginning to wake up to Play Centres, and lately I have had three applications to start Centres in one week. Then I have also begun a new book [*The Case of Richard Meynell*] and even completed and sent off the first number. But I am very harassed about the book, which does not lie clear before me by any means. Still, I have been able to read a good deal—William James, and Tyrrell, and Claude Montefiore's book on the Synoptics, and some other theology and history.

"Life is *too* crowded!—don't you feel it so? Every year brings its fresh interests and claims, and one can't let go the old. Yet I hope there may be time left for some resting, watching years at the end of it all—when one may sit in the chimney corner, look on—and think!"

"Some resting, watching years"! The gods were indeed asleep when Mrs. Ward breathed this prayer, or was it that they knew, better than she, that life without toil would have been no life to her?

Among the self-imposed labours which Mrs. Ward added to her burden during the year 1910, was that of taking an active part in the two General Elections of that *annus mirabilis*. Her son had been adopted as Unionist candidate for the West Herts Division, in which Stocks lay, and Mrs. Ward was so disgusted by what she conceived to be the violence and unfairness of the leaflets issued by both sides that she decided to sit down and write a series of her own, intended primarily for the villages round Stocks and written in simple but persuasive language. These "Letters to my Neighbours," as they were entitled, dealt with all the burning questions of the day—the rejection of the Budget by the House of Lords, Tariff Reform, the new Land Taxes, Home Rule for Ireland and so forth; but their fame did not remain confined to the villages of West Herts, but spread first to Sheffield and thence to many other great

towns and county divisions. Mrs. Ward was by this time a convinced Tariff Reformer, and set forth the case in favour of Protection in lucid and attractive style ; she had learnt the way to do this in the course of certain " Talks with Voters " which she had held in the little village schoolroom at Aldbury and in which she had penetrated with her usual sympathy and directness into the recesses of the rustic mind. The whole thing was, of course, a direct attempt to influence public opinion on a political issue, on the part of one who had no vote, and as such was not missed by the sharp eye of Mrs. Fawcett. The Suffrage leader twitted Mrs. Ward with her inconsistency in a speech to a Women's Congress in the summer of 1910, drawing from Mrs. Ward a reply in *The Times* which showed that her withers were quite unwrung. Her contention was, in fact, that the minority of women who cared about politics had as good a right as anyone else to influence opinion, *if they could*, and would succeed " as men succeed, in proportion to their knowledge, their energy and their patience . . . That a woman member of the National Union of Teachers, that the wives and daughters of professional and working men, that educated women generally, should try to influence the votes of male voters towards causes in which they believe, seems to me only part of the general national processs of making and enforcing opinion." At any rate in the village of Aldbury and far outside it, Mrs. Ward was accepted as a " maker of opinion " because the people loved her, and because at the end of her little " Talks with Voters " she never failed to remind her hearers that the ballot was secret. Her son was duly elected for West Herts—a result which Mrs. Ward could not be expected to take with as much philosophy as Mrs. Dell, our village oracle, whose only remark was, " Lumme, sech a fustle and a bustle ! And when all's say and do one's out and the other's in ! "

The election made Mrs. Ward more intimate than she had been before with the village folk and with her county neighbours—amongst whom she had many close friends—but her real delight still was to receive her relations and friends, to stay in the house, and there to make much of them. Among these her sister Ethel was a constant visitor, together with her great friend Miss Williams-Freeman, whose knowledge of France and of French people

was always a delight to Mrs. Ward. Then there were those whom she would beguile from London on shorter visits—so far as she could afford the time to entertain them! Not every Sunday, by any means, could she allow herself this pleasure, but her instinct for hospitality was so strong that she stretched many points in this direction, paying for her indulgence afterwards by a still harder "grind." There were red-letter days when she persuaded her oldest friends of all, Mrs. T. H. Green or the Arthur Johnsons, to uproot themselves from Oxford and come to talk of all things in heaven and earth with her; Mrs. Creighton was an annual visitor, usually for several days in the autumn; Miss Cropper, of Kendal, and the Hugh Bells, of Rounton, were among the few whom Mrs. Ward not only loved to have at Stocks, but with whom she in her turn would go to stay, reviving in Westmorland and Yorkshire her love for the North. Then there was Henry James, whose rarer visits made him each time the more beloved, and with whom Mrs. Ward maintained all through these years a correspondence which might have delighted posterity, but of which he, alas, destroyed her share before he died. Many, too, were the friends from the world of politics or journalism who found their way to Stocks: Mr. Haldane and Alfred Lyttelton; Oakeley Arnold-Forster, her cousin, whose career in the Unionist Cabinet was cut short by death in 1909; Sir Donald Wallace, the George Protheros and Mr. Chirol, and ever and anon some friend from Italy or France—Count Ugo Balzani and his daughters, Carlo Segrè or André Chevrillon, whose presence only made the talk leap faster and more joyously. The sound and the flavour of their talk is gone for ever, but the memory of those days, and of their hostess, must still be green in the hearts of many.

Young people, too, were always welcomed by Mrs. Ward, especially the many nieces and nephews who were now growing up around her and who were accustomed to look to Stocks almost as to a second home. Amongst these were the whole Selwyn family, children of her sister Lucy, who had died in 1894; both children and father (Dr. E. C. Selwyn, Headmaster of Uppingham School) were very dear to Mrs. Ward and frequently came to fill the house at Stocks. Two splendid sons of this family, Arthur and



MRS. WARD AND HENRY JAMES IN THE GARDEN AT STOCKS

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY MISS DOROTHY WARD

Christopher, were to give up their lives in the War. Their stepmother, who had been Mrs. Ward's favourite cousin on the Sorell side, Miss Maud Dunn, occupied after her marriage a still more intimate place in her affections. One little boy she had, George, to whom Mrs. Ward was much attached for his quaint and serious character, but he too was doomed to die in France, of influenza, in the last month of the War.

That member of her own family, however, to whom Mrs. Ward was most deeply attached, her sister Julia (Mrs. Leonard Huxley), fell a victim in the year 1908, at the age of only 46, to a swift and terrible form of malignant disease. With her perished not only the gifted foundress of the great girls' school at Priors' Field, but Mrs. Ward's most intimate friend—the person with whom she shared all joys and sorrows, and whom it was an ever-new delight to receive at Stocks, with her brood of brilliant children. She had been amongst the first guests to visit the house in 1892; she was there within two months of her death in 1908. Such a shock went very deep with Mrs. Ward, but she spent herself all the more in devotion to "Judy's" children, whom she loved next to her own and who had always, since their babyhood, spent a large part of each year's holidays at Stocks. And they on their side were not ashamed to return her affection. Julian and Trevenen, Aldous and Margaret became to her almost a second family, leaning on her and loving and chaffing her as only the keen-witted children of a house know how to do.

For if Stocks was a Paradise to the tired week-end visitor from London, or to the stalwart young ones who could play cricket or tennis on its lawns, it was still more the Paradise of little children. Mrs. Ward was never really happy unless there were children in the house, the younger the better, and one of the joys of the re-building was that it provided her, on the transformed eastern side, with a pair of nurseries which only asked thenceforward to be tenanted. Her grandchildren, Mary, Theodore and Humphry, were naturally the most frequent tenants, and there accumulated a store of ancient treasures to which they looked forward with unfailing joy each time that they returned. Usually, too, they found that "Gunny" (as they had early christened her) had surreptitiously added to the store during their

absence, which was unorthodox, but pleasant. How she loved to fill their red mouths with strawberries or grapes, to hear their voices on the stairs, or their shrill shrieks as they played hide-and-seek on the lawn with some captive grown-up! The two elders, Mary and Theodore, paid her a visit every morning, with the regularity of clockwork, just as her breakfast-tray arrived, and then sat on the bed, with sly, expectant faces, waiting for the execution of the egg—a drama that was performed each day with a prescribed ritual, varying only in the intensity of the egg's protests against decapitation. The invaders usually ended by consuming far more than their share of Gunny's breakfast. And as they grew in stature and delightsomeness, Mrs. Ward became only the more devoted to them, till when Theo was four and Mary five and a half, they would pay for their 'bits of egg' by show performances of *Horatius*, declaiming it there on the big bed till the room re-echoed with their noise. Or else they would act the coming of King Charles into the House of Commons in search of the five members, Mary being the Speaker and Theo the disgruntled King, or, now and then, descend to modern politics by singing her derisive ditties such as—

> "Tariff Reform means work for all,
> Work for all, work for all;
> Tariff Reform means work for all,
> Chopping up wood in the Workhouse."

"Gunny" would become quite limp with laughing at the wickedness and point which Theodore would throw into the singing of this song, for the rascal knew full well that she had succumbed to what Mrs. Dell, after a village meeting, had christened "Tarridy-form."

Whenever one of their long visits to Stocks came to an end, Mrs. Ward would be most disconsolate. "*How* I miss the children," she wrote to J. P. T. in January, 1911, "—it is quite foolish. I can never pass the nursery door without a pang." Three months later, while she was staying at an Italian villa in the Lucchese hills, the news fell upon her that the beloved grandson whose every look and gesture was to her "an embodied joy," would be hers no longer. He had died beside the sea,

> . . . φίλῃ ἐν πατρίδι γαίῃ,

and the fells which stand around the little church in the Langdale valley looked down upon another grave.

It was long before Mrs. Ward could surmount this grief. That summer (1911) she was busied with the organization of her Playgrounds for the thousands upon thousands of London children who had no Stocks to play in.

> "Sometimes," she wrote, "when I think of the masses of London children I have been going through I seem to imagine him beside me, his eager little hand in mine, looking at the dockers' children, ragged, half-starved, disfigured, with his grave sweet eyes, eyes so full already of humanity and pity. Is it so that his spirit lives with us—the beloved one—part for ever of all that is best in us, all that is nearest to God, in whom, I must believe, he lives."

During these years between her visit to America and the outbreak of War, Mrs. Ward produced no less than six novels, including the two on America and Canada which we have already mentioned. She also issued, in the autumn of 1911, with Mr. Reginald Smith's help and guidance, the "Westmorland Edition" of her earlier books (from *Miss Bretherton* to *Canadian Born*), contributing to them a series of critical and autobiographical Prefaces which, as the *Oxford Chronicle* said, "to a great extent disarm criticism because in them Mrs. Ward appears as her own best critic." Time and again, in these Introductions, we find her seizing upon the weak point in her characters or her constructions: how *Robert Elsmere* "lacks irony and detachment," how *David Grieve* is "didactic in some parts and amateurish in others," how in *Sir George Tressady* Marcella "hovers incorporate and only very rarely finds her feet." This candour made the new edition all the more acceptable to her old admirers, and set the critics arguing once more on their old theme, as to whether Mrs. Ward possessed or not a sense of humour. If it may be permitted to one so near to her to venture an opinion on this point, it is that Mrs. Ward, like all those who possess the ardent temperament, the will to move the world, worked first and foremost by the methods of direct attack rather than by the subtler shafts of humour; but no one could live beside her, especially in these years of her maturity, without falling under the spell of something

which, if not humour, was at least a vivid gift of "irony and detachment," asserting itself constantly at the expense of herself and her doings and finding its way, surely, into so many of her later books. Her minor characters are usually instinct with it; they form the chorus, or the "volley of silvery laughter" for ever threatening her too ardent heroes from the Meredithian "spirit up aloft," and show that she herself is by no means totally carried away by the ardours she creates. My own feeling is that this gift of "irony and detachment" grew stronger with the years, perhaps as the original motive force grew weaker, and though she maintained to the end her unconquerable fighting spirit, as shown in her struggle against the Suffrage and her keen interest in politics, these things were crossed more frequently by humorous returns upon herself which made her all the more delightful to those who knew her well. And in the little things of life, no one was ever more easy to move to helpless laughter over her own foibles. When she had bought no less than five hats for her daughter on a motor-drive from Stocks to London—"on spec, darling, at horrid little cheap shops in the Edgware Road"—or when at Cadenabbia, she had actually sallied forth *unattended* in order to buy a pair of the peasants' string shoes, and had gone through a series of harrowing adventures, no one who heard her tell the tale could doubt that she was richly endowed with the power of laughing at herself. In her writings she was, perhaps, a little sensitive about the point.

> "*Am* I so devoid of humour?" she wrote to Mr. Reginald Smith, in September, 1911. "I was looking at *David Grieve* again the other day—surely there is a good deal that is humorous there. And if I may be egotistical and repeat them, I heard such pleasing things about *David* from Lord Arran in Dublin the other day. He knows it absolutely by heart, and he says that when he was campaigning in South Africa two battered copies of *David* were read to pieces by him and his brother-officers, and every night they discussed it round the camp fires."

The inference being, no doubt, that a set of hard-bitten British officers would hardly have wasted their scanty leisure on a book that totally lacked the indispensable national ingredient.

The last novel with a definitely religious tendency to which Mrs. Ward set her hand was her well-known sequel to *Robert Elsmere*, the "Case" of the Modernist clergyman, Richard Meynell. It was by far the most considerable work of her later years and represented the fruit of her ripest meditations on the evolution of religious thought and practice in the twenty years that had elapsed since *Robert's* day. Ever since the Loisy case she had been deeply possessed by the literature of Modernism, seeing in it the force which would, she believed, in the end regenerate the churches.

"What interests and touches me most, in religion, at the present moment," she wrote to Mrs. Creighton, in September, 1907, "is Liberal Catholicism. It has a bolder freedom than anything in the Anglican Church, and a more philosophic and poetic outlook. It seems to me at any rate to combine the mystical and scientific powers in a wonderful degree. If I only could believe that it would last, and had a future!"

She was deep in the writings of Father Tyrrell, of Bergson and of William James during these years, but while she allowed herself, perhaps, as time went on, a more mystical interpretation of the Gospel narratives, she was still as convinced as ever of the necessity for historical criticism.

To J. P. T.

"VALESCURE,
"*Easter Day*, 1910.

. . . "It is good to be alive on spring days like this! I have been reading William James on this very point—the worth of being alive—and before that the Emmaus story and the appearance to the Maries. I more and more believe that the whole resurrection story, as a story, arose from the transference of the body by the Romans—at Jewish bidding, no doubt—to a hidden sepulchre to avoid a local cult. The vacant grave seems to me historic fact,—next to it, the visions in Galilee, perhaps springing from *one* vivid dream of a disciple such as I had both of my father and mother after their deaths—and then theology, and poetry, environment and inherited belief did the rest. Yet what an amazing thing the rest is, and how impossible to suppose that it—or any other great religion—means nothing in the scheme of things."

She had been much excited, also, by the instances of revolt in a Liberal direction which were occurring at this time within the English Church, such as that of Mr. Thompson of Magdalen; and so, out of these various elements, she wove her tale of *Richard Meynell*. When she was already deep in the writing of the book she came, quite by chance, upon a country parish in Cheshire where a similar drama was going on.

To Reginald Smith

"STOCKS,

"*October* 11, 1910.

. . . "I have returned home a great deal better than when I went, I am glad to say. And on Sunday I heard Meynell preach!—in Alderley church, in the person of Mr. Hudson Shaw. An astonishing sermon, and a crowded congregation. 'I shall not in future read the Athanasian Creed, or the cursing psalms or the Ten Commandments, or the Exhortation at the beginning of the Marriage Service—and I shall take the consequences. The Baptismal Service ought to be altered—so ought the Burial Service. And how you, the laity, can tolerate us—the clergy—standing up Sunday after Sunday and saying these things to you, I cannot understand. But I for one will do it no more, happen what may.'

"I really felt that *Richard Meynell* was likely to be in the movement!"

Richard Meynell, as the readers of this book will remember, makes himself the leader of a crusade for modernizing and re-vivifying the services of the Church, in accordance with the new preaching of "the Christ of to-day,"—finds his message taken up by hundreds of his fellow priests and hundreds of thousands of eager souls throughout the country,—comes into collision with the higher powers of the Church, takes his trial in the Court of Arches, and, when the inevitable judgment goes against him, leaves us, on a note of hope, carrying his appeal to the Privy Council, to Parliament and to the people of England. The whole book is written in a vein of passionate inspiration—save for the few touches, here and there, which convey the note of irony or contemplation—; the reader may disagree, but he cannot help

being carried away, for the time at least, by the infectious enthusiasm of Meynell and his movement.

" Perhaps the strongest impression," declared one of the reviewers, " at once the most striking and the most profound, created by *The Case of Richard Meynell*, is its religious optimism. One finds oneself marvelling how any writer, in so sceptical an age as this, can picture a Modernist religious movement with so inspired, so fervent a pen, as to kindle a factitious flame even in hearts grown cold to religious inspiration and to religious hope."

Others, again, pronounced the book to be, on the whole, a failure. " And yet," said the *Dublin Review*, " there is a certain force in Mrs. Humphry Ward that enables her to push her defective machine into motion ; *Richard Meynell* is the work of a forcible, if tired, imagination. This fact may be wrong, and that detail ugly, and another phrase offensive to the sense of the ridiculous ; but as a whole it ranks higher than many and many a production that is lightly touched in and delicately edged with satire. Spiritual sufferings, a yearning after truth, self-restraint, revolt, the helpless wish to aid those who will not be helped, the texture of fine souls, such things are brought home to us in *Richard Meynell*. This is not done by the vitality of the author's personages, for they never wholly escape from bondage to the main intention of the book, but it is done by contact with a remarkable mind tuned to fine issues."

The reappearance of Catherine Elsmere, far less overwhelming and more attractive than in the earlier book, endeared this tale to all who remembered Robert's wife ; her death in the little house in Long Sleddale where Robert had first found her was felt to be a masterpiece that Mrs. Ward had never surpassed.

The writer did not disguise from herself and her friends that she looked forward with unusual interest to the reception of this book. Would it in truth find itself " in the movement " ? Would it kindle into a flame the dull embers of religious faith and freedom ?

> " What I should like to do this winter," she wrote to Mrs. Creighton, in September, 1911 (six weeks before the book's appearance), " is to write a volume of imaginary ' Sermons and Journals of Richard Meynell,' going in

detail into many of the points only touched in the book. If the book has the great success the publishers predict, I could devote myself to handling in another form some of the subjects that have been long in my mind. But of course it may have no such success at all. I sometimes think that, as Mr. Holmes maintains in his extraordinarily interesting book,[1] the church teaching of the last twenty years has gone a long way towards paganizing England—together of course with the increase of wealth and hurry."

These "Sermons and Journals of Richard Meynell" were, however, never written. The book certainly aroused interest and even controversy in England, but it did not sweep the country and set all tongues wagging, as *Elsmere* had done, while in America the populace refused to be roused by what they regarded as the domestic affairs of the English Church. Mrs. Ward never spoke of Meynell's reception as a disappointment, but she must have felt it so, and within six months of its appearance she was at work, as usual, upon its successor.

Yet a piece of work which brought her two such letters as the following (amongst many others) cannot be said to have gone unrewarded :—

From Frederic Harrison

"I am one of those to whom your book specially appeals, as I know so much of the literature, the persons, the questions it dealt with. It has given me the most lively interest both as romance—as fine as anything since *Adam Bede*—and also as controversy—as important as anything since *Essays and Reviews*. Meynell seems to me a far higher type than Elsmere, both as a man and as a book, and I am sure will have a greater permanent value—even if its popularity for the hour is not so rapid—for it appeals to a higher order of reader, and is of a larger kind of art."

From André Chevrillon

"On est heureux d'y retrouver ce qui nous a paru si longtemps une des principales caractéristiques de la littérature anglaise : ce sentiment de la beauté morale, cette émotion devant la qualité de la conduite qui prennent par leur intensité même une valeur esthétique. C'est la tradition de vos écrivains les plus anglais, celle des

[1] *What Is and What Might Be.* By Edmond Holmes.

Browning, des Tennyson, des George Eliot. Elle fait la portée et l'originalité des œuvres de cette époque victorienne, contre laquelle on a l'air, malheureusement, d'être en réaction en Angleterre aujourd'hui—réaction que je ne crois pas durable—qui cessera dès que le recule sera suffisant pour que la force et la grandeur de cette littérature apparaisse.

"Le problème religieux que vous posez là est vital, et la solution que vous y prévoyez dans votre pays, cette possibilité d'un christianisme évolué, adapté, qui conserverait les formes anciennes avec leur puissance si efficace de prestige, tout en attribuant de plus en plus aux vieilles formules, aux vieux rites une valeur de symbole—cette solution est celle que l'on peut espérer du protestantisme, lequel est relativement peu cristalisé et peut encore évoluer. Même dans l'anglicanisme la part de l'interprétation personnelle a toujours été assez grande. J'ai peur que l'avenir de la religion soit plus douteux dans ceux des pays catholiques où la culture est avancée. Nous sommes là comme des vivants liés à des cadavres, ou comme des grandes personnes que l'on astreindrait au régime de la *nursery*. Les mêmes formules, les mêmes articles de foi, le même catéchisme, les mêmes interprétations, doivent servir à la fois à des peuple de mentalité encore primitive et semi-païenne et à des sociétés aussi intellectuelles et civilisées que la nôtre. Nous n'avons le choix qu'entre le culte des reliques, la foi aux eaux miraculeuses, et l'agnosticisme pur, ou du moins, une religiosité amorphe, sans système ni discipline."

The writing of *Richard Meynell* left Mrs. Ward very tired, and all the next year (1912) she "puddled along" as Mrs. Dell would have put it, accomplishing her tasks with all her old devotion, but suffering from sleeplessness and knowing that the novel of that year, *The Mating of Lydia*, was not really up to standard. Mr. Ward, too, fell ill, and remained in precarious health for the next four years, which gravely added to his wife's anxieties. The burdens of life pressed upon her, while the maintenance of her Play Centres seemed sometimes an almost impossible addition. Italy was still the best restorative for all these ills. Every spring she fled across the Alps, enjoying a week or two of holiday and then

settling, with her daughter, in some Villa where she might work undisturbed. In 1909 she went for the last time to the Villa Bonaventura at Cadenabbia, the place which was to her, I think, the high-water mark of earthly bliss. This time her stay was marked by one long-remembered day—a flying visit paid her from Milan by Contessa Maria Pasolini, the friend for whom, amongst all her Italian aquaintance, Mrs Ward felt the strongest devotion. She could watch her, or listen to her talk, for hours with unfailing delight; for she seemed to embody in herself both the wisdom and the charm, the age and the youth, of Italy. It was a friendship worthy of two noble spirits. Never again was Mrs. Ward able to rise to the Villa Bonaventura, but she explored other parts of Italy with almost equal delight, settling at the Villa Pazzi, outside Florence, in April, 1910, at a bare but fascinating Villa in the Lucchese hills in the next year, and in a fragment of a palace on the Grand Canal in 1912. It was during this stay in Venice that Mr. Reginald Smith obtained for her, from Mr. Pen Browning, permission to camp and work in the empty Rezzonico Palace, a privilege which she greatly valued and which gave her many romantic hours. While savouring thus the delights of Venice she was enabled, too, to witness the formal inauguration of the new-built Campanile, watching the splendid ceremony from a seat in the Piazzetta.

> "Venice has been delirious to-day," she wrote to Reginald Smith on St. Mark's Day, April 25, "and the inauguration of the Campanile was really a most moving sight. 'Il Campanile è morto—viva il Campanile!' The letting loose of the pigeons—the first sound of the glorious bells after these ten years of silence—the thousands of children's voices—the extraordinary beauty of the setting—the splendour of the day—it was all perfect, and one feels that Italy may well be proud."

Her great relaxation during all these sojourns, but especially during a stay of six weeks at Rydal Mount during the autumn of 1911, was to play with brushes and paint, for she had skill enough in the problems of colour and line to throw off all other cares in their pursuit, while her inevitable imperfections only spurred her to fresh efforts. Dorothy would call it her "public-house," for she could not keep away from it and would exhaust herself, sometimes, in the



MRS. WARD BESIDE THE LAKE OF LUCERNE, 1912

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY MISS DOROTHY WARD

pursuit of the ideal, but the results were full of charm and are much treasured by their few possessors.

In 1913, as though to confound her critics, Mrs. Ward produced the book which contained, perhaps, the most brilliant character-drawing that she had ever attempted—*The Coryston Family*. She was pleased with its success, which was indeed needed to reassure her, for at this time occurred some serious losses, not of her making, which had to be faced, and, if possible, repaired. She was already sixty-two and her health, as we know, was more than precarious, but she set herself to work perhaps harder than ever. "Courage!" she wrote in July 1913, "and perhaps this time next year, if we are all well, the clouds will have rolled away."

When that time came, when the Archduke Francis Ferdinand had been murdered at Serajevo and we in England, no less than the Serbian peasant and the French *piou-piou*, found ourselves face to face with a horror never known before, the crisis found Mrs. Ward at a low ebb of health and spirits. Attacks of giddiness led the doctors to pronounce that she was suffering from "heart fatigue." Mr. Ward's illness had increased rather than diminished; Stocks was abandoned for a time (though to a charming tenant and a sister novelist, Mrs. Wharton), and the three had migrated to a small and unattractive house in Fifeshire, where Mrs. Ward applied herself once more to writing. There the blow fell. Her first reaction to it was one of mere revolt, a cry of blind human misery. "What madness is it that drives men to such horrors?—not for great causes, but for dark diplomatic and military motives only understood by the ruling class, and for which hundreds of thousands will be sent to their death like sheep to the slaughter! Germany, Russia and Austria seem to me all equally criminal." Then, as the news came rolling in, from the "dark motives" there seemed to detach itself one clear, stabbing thought. France! France invaded, perhaps overwhelmed!

"To me she is still the France of Taine, and Renan, and Pasteur, of an immortal literature, and a history that, blood-stained as it is, makes a page that humanity could ill spare. No, I am with her, heart and soul, and to see her wiped out by Germany would put out for me one of the world's great lights."

CHAPTER XIV

THE WAR, 1914–1917—MRS. WARD'S FIRST TWO JOURNEYS TO FRANCE

MRS. WARD'S feeling about the Germans, before the thunderbolt of 1914, had been one of sincere respect and admiration for a nation of patient brain-workers who, she believed, were honest with the truth, and had delved farther into certain obscure fields of history in which she herself was deeply interested than any of their contemporaries. But her acquaintance with Germany was a book-acquaintance only. She had indeed paid one or two visits to the Rhine and to South Germany during her married life, and had been astonished to mark, in 1900, the growth of wealth and prosperity in the Rhine towns, due, she was told, to scientific protection and to the skilful use of the French indemnity. But she had no personal friendships with Germans, and her knowledge of their state of mind was derived only from books and newspapers and the reports of others. Still, these had become disquieting enough, as all the world remembers, between 1911 and 1914, but Mrs. Ward clung to the optimistic view that the hatred and envy of England, so apparent in German newspaper writing, was but the creed of a clique, and that the heart of the laborious and thrifty German people was still sound. In April, 1913, a delegation of German Professors came over to London to take part in a historical congress; Mrs. Ward willingly assisted in entertaining them, giving a large evening party in their honour at Grosvenor Place. Perhaps the atmosphere was already a little strained, but we mustered our forgotten German as best we might, and flattered ourselves at the end that things had not gone badly. Little more than a year afterwards the names of nearly all our guests were to be found in the manifesto of the ninety-three

German Professors—the pronouncement which above all others in those grim days stirred Mrs. Ward's indignation. She expressed her sense of the "bitter personal disillusionment which I, and so many Englishmen and Englishwomen, have suffered since this war began," in a Preface which she wrote, in 1916, to the German edition of *England's Effort*—an edition which was intended for circulation in German Switzerland, but found its way also, as we afterwards heard, to a good many centres within Germany itself:

"We were lifelong lovers and admirers of a Germany which, it seems now, never really existed except in our dreams. In the article 'A New Reformation,' which I published in the *Nineteenth Century* in 1889, in answer to Mr. Gladstone's critique of *Robert Elsmere*, and in many later utterances, I have rendered whole-hearted homage to that critical and philosophical Germany which I took to be the real Germany, and hailed as the home of liberal and humane ideas. And now! In that amazing manifesto of the German Professors at the opening of the War, there were names of men—that of Adolf Harnack, for instance—which had never been mentioned in English scholarly circles before August, 1914, except with sympathy and admiration, even by those who sharply differed from the views they represented. We held them to be servants of truth, incapable therefore of acquiescence in a tyrannous lie. We held them also to be scholars, incapable therefore of falsifying facts and ignoring documents in their own interest. But in that astonishing manifesto, not only was the cry of Belgium wholly repulsed, but those very men who had taught Europe to respect evidence and to deal scrupulously with documents, when it was a question of Classical antiquity, or early Christianity, now, when it was a question of justifying the crime of their country, of defending the Government of which they were the salaried officials, threw evidence and documents to the winds. How many of those who signed the professorial manifesto had ever read the British White Paper, and the French Yellow Book, or, if they had read them, had ever given to those damning records of Germany's attack on Europe, and of the vain efforts of the Allies to hold her back, one fraction of that honest and impartial study of which a newly discovered Greek inscription, or a

fragment of a lost Gospel, would have been certain at their hands ? "

It was this feeling of the betrayal of high standards and ideals which had meant much to her in earlier life, coupled with the emergence of a native ferocity unguessed before (for *we* had not lived through 1870), that went so deep with Mrs. Ward. But there were at least no personal friendships to break. With France, on the other hand, her ties had, as we know, been close and intimate from the beginning, so that her heart went out to the trials and agonies of her French friends with a peculiar poignancy. M. Chevrillon, her principal correspondent, gave her in a series of letters, from November, 1914, onwards, a wonderful picture of the sufferings, the heroisms and the moods of France ; she replied—to this lover of Meredith !—with her reading of the English scene :

" Stocks,
" *November* 23, 1914.

" We are indeed no less absorbed in the War than you. And yet, perhaps, there is not that *unrelenting* pressure on nerve and recollection in this country, ' set in the silver sea ' and so far inviolate, which there must be for you, who have this cruel and powerful enemy at your gates and in your midst, and can never forget the fact for a moment. That, of course, is the explanation of the recent slackening of recruiting here. The classes to whom education and social life have taught imagination are miserable and shamed before these great football gatherings, which bring no recruits—' but my people do not understand, and Israel doth not consider. They have eyes and see not ; ears have they but they hear not.' One little raid on the East Coast—a village burnt, a few hundred men killed on English soil—then indeed we should see an England in arms. Meanwhile, compared with any England we have ever seen, it *is* an England in arms. Every town of any size has its camp, the roads are full of soldiers, and they are billeted in our houses. No such sight, of course, has ever been seen in our day. And yet how quickly one accustoms oneself to it, and to all the other accompaniments of war ! The new recruits

are mostly excellent material. Dorothy and I motored over early one morning last week to Aston Clinton Park to see the King inspect a large gathering of recruits. It was a beautiful morning, with the misty Chilterns looking down upon the wide stretches of the park, and the bodies of drilling men. The King must have been up early, for he had inspected the camp at ten (thirty-five miles from London) and was in the park by eleven. There was no ceremony whatever, and only a few neighbours and children looking on. It had been elaborately announced that he would inspect troops that day in Norfolk! The men were only in the early stages, but they were mostly of fine physique—miners from Northumberland a great many of them. The difficulty is officers. They have to accept them now, either so young, or so elderly! And these well-to-do workmen of twenty-five or thirty don't like being ordered about by lads of nineteen. But the lads of nineteen are shaping, too, very fast.

"We are so sorry for your poor niece, and for all the other sufferers you tell us of. I have five nephews fighting, and of course innumerable friends. Arnold is in Egypt with his Yeomanry. One dreads to open *The Times*, day after day. The most tragic loss I know so far is that of the Edward Cecils' only boy—grandson of the late Lord Salisbury, and Admiral Maxse, the Beauchamp of *Beauchamp's Career*. I saw him last as a delightful chattering boy of eleven—so clever, so handsome, just what Beauchamp might have been at his age! He was missing on September 2, and was only announced as killed two days ago."

The first year and a half of the War was a time of great anxiety and strain for Mrs. Ward, both in the literary and the practical fields. Besides her unremitting literary work she pushed through, by means of the "Joint Advisory Committee," an exhaustive inquiry into the working of the existing system of soldiers' pensions and pressed certain recommendations, as a result, upon the War Office; she was confronted by a partial falling-off in the subscriptions to her Play Centres, and was obliged to introduce economies and curtailments which cost her much anxious thought; she converted the Settlement into a temporary hostel for

Belgian Refugees; and, above all, she carried through, between October, 1914, and the summer of 1915, a complete reorganization of the Passmore Edwards Settlement, converting it from a men's into a women's settlement. There were many reasons, even apart from the growing pressure on men of military age to enlist in the New Armies, which had for some time made such a change desirable in the eyes of Mrs. Ward and of a majority of the Council; chief among these being the need for a body of trained voluntary workers to carry out, for St. Pancras, the mass of social legislation that had been passed since the foundation of the Settlement, and to take their part in the work of School Care Committees, Schools for Mothers and so forth. Male Residents, being occupied with their own work during the day, were not available for such things; but amongst women it was believed that a body possessing sufficient leisure and enthusiasm for social service to make a real mark in the life of the neighbourhood, would not be difficult to find. The change was not accomplished without strenuous opposition from the existing Warden and some of the Residents, but Mrs. Ward went methodically to work, getting the Council to appoint a Committee with powers to inquire and report. She found also that her old friend and supporter, the Duke of Bedford, was strongly in favour of the change, and would be ready to provide, for three years, about two-thirds of the annual sum required for the maintenance of a Women's Settlement. This argument was decisive, and the Council finally adopted the Report of the Special Committee in May, 1915. Mrs. Ward had the happiness of seeing, during the remaining years of the War, her hopes for the usefulness of the new venture very largely fulfilled, under the able guidance of Miss Hilda Oakeley, who was appointed Warden of the Settlement in August, 1915.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Ward felt herself in danger of seeing her usual means of livelihood cut from beneath her feet during this first period of the War. For one result of the vast upheaval in our social conditions was that the circulation of all novels went down with a run, and it was not until the War had made a certain dismal routine of its own, in the needs of hospitals, munition-centres, soldiers' and officers' clubs and the like, that the national taste for the

reading of fiction reasserted itself. Till then Mrs. Ward relied mainly on her American public, which was still untouched; but the pressure of work was never for an instant relaxed, and fortunately she still found her greatest solace and relief from present cares in the writing of books. "I never felt more inclined to spin tales, which is a great comfort," she wrote in January, 1915, but as yet she could not face the thought of weaving the War into their fabric, and took refuge instead in the summer of that year in the making of a story of Oxford life, as she had known it in her youth—an occupation that gave her a quiet joy, providing a "wind-warm space" into which she could retreat from the horrors of the outer world. The compulsory retrenchments of the War years came also to her aid, in reducing the *personnel* employed at Stocks, while Stocks itself was usually let in the summer and Grosvenor Place in the winter; but still the struggle was an arduous one, leaving its mark upon her in the growing whiteness of her hair, the growing fragility and pallor of her look. Sleeplessness became an ever greater difficulty in these years, but on the other hand her old complaint in the right side had grown less troublesome, so that standing and walking were more possible than of old. Had it not been for this improvement she would have been physically incapable of carrying out the task laid upon her, swiftly and unexpectedly, in January, 1916, when Theodore Roosevelt wrote to her from Oyster Bay to beg her to tell America what England was doing in the War.

December 27, 1915.

MY DEAR MRS. WARD,—

The War has been, on the whole, well presented in America from the French side. We do not think justice has been done to the English side. I attribute this in part to the rather odd working of the censorship in hands not accustomed to the censorship. I wish that some writer like yourself could, in a series of articles, put vividly before our people what the English people are doing, what the actual life of the men in the trenches is, what is actually being done by the straight and decent capitalist, who is not concerned with making a profit, but with serving his country, and by the straight and

decent labouring man, who is not thinking of striking for higher wages, but is trying to help his comrades in the trenches. What I would like our people to visualize is the effort, the resolution and the self-sacrifice of the English men and women who are determined to see this war through. Just at present England is in much the same strait that we were in in our Civil War toward the end of 1862, and during the opening months of 1863. That was the time when we needed to have our case put before the people of England—when men as diverse as Gladstone, Carlyle and the after-time Marquis of Salisbury were all strongly against us. There is not a human being more fitted to present this matter as it should be presented than you are. I do hope you will undertake the task.

Faithfully yours,
THEODORE ROOSEVELT.

The letter reached Mrs. Ward at Stocks on Monday, January 10, 1916, by the evening post. She felt at once that she must respond to such a call, though the manner of doing so was still dim to her. But she consulted her friends, C. F. G. Masterman and Sir Gilbert Parker, at " Wellington House " (at that time the Government Propaganda Department), and found that they took Mr. Roosevelt's letter quite as seriously as she did herself. They showed her specimens of what the American papers were saying about England, her blunders, her slackers and her shirkers, till Mrs. Ward thrilled to the task and felt a longing to be up and at it. The next step was to see Sir Edward Grey (then Foreign Minister), to whom she had also sent a copy of the letter. He asked her to come to his house in Eccleston Square, whither accordingly she went early on January 20.

" They showed me into the dining-room," she wrote to J. P. T., " and he came down to say that he had asked Lord Robert Cecil and Sir Arthur Nicolson to come too, and that they were upstairs. So then we went into his library sitting-room, a charming room full of books, and there were the other two. They all took Roosevelt's letter very seriously, and there is no question but that I must do my best to carry it out. I simply felt after Edward Grey had spoken his mind that, money or no

money, strength or fatigue, I was under orders and must just go on. I said that I should like to go to France, just for the sake of giving some life and colour to the articles —and that a novelist could not work from films, however good. They agreed.

" ' And would you like to have a look at the Fleet ? ' said Lord Robert.

" I said that I had not ventured to suggest it, but that of course anything that gave picturesqueness and novelty —i.e. a woman being allowed to visit the Fleet—would help the articles.

" I gave a little outline of what I proposed, beginning with the unpreparedness of England. On that Edward Grey spoke at some length—the utter absence of any wish for war in this country, or thought of war. Even those centres that had suffered most from German competition had never thought of war. No one wished for it. I thought of his long, long struggle for peace. It was pathetic to hear him talking so simply—with such complete conviction.

" I was rather more than half an hour with them. Sir Edward took me downstairs, said it was ' good of me ' to be willing to undertake it, and I went off feeling the die was cast."

A luncheon with Mr. Lloyd George—then Minister of Munitions—who gladly offered her every possible facility for seeing the great munition-centres that had by that time altered the face of England, and the plan for carrying out her task began to shape itself in her mind. A tour of ten days or so through the principal munition-works, ranging from Birmingham to the Clyde, then a dash to the Fleet, lying in the Firth of Cromarty, then south once more and across the Straits to see the " back of the Army " in France. It may be imagined what busy co-ordination of arrangements was necessary between the Ministry of Munitions, the Admiralty and the War Office, before all the details of the tour were settled, but by the aid of " Wellington House " all was hustled through in a short time, so that Mrs. Ward was off on her round of the great towns by January 31. To her, of course, the human interest of the scene was the all-important thing—the spectacle of the mixture of classes in the vast factories, the high-school mistresses, the parsons,

the tailors' and drapers' assistants handling their machines as lovingly as the born engineers—the enormous sheds-full of women and girls of many diverse types working together with one common impulse, and protesting against the cutting down of their twelve hours' day! She was taken everywhere and shown everything (accompanied this time by Miss Churcher), seeing in the space of ten days the munition-works at Birmingham, Leeds, Sheffield, Darlington, Middlesbrough, Newcastle and the Clyde. Then she returned home for a few days, to fix her impressions in an ordered mass of notes, before leaving again on February 15 for the far north, armed with an Admiralty permit and an invitation from Sir John Jellicoe to spend a couple of nights in his house at Invergordon.

It was, of course, an unheard-of thing for a woman to visit the Fleet in war-time, but, once the barriers passed, the sailors were so glad to see her! Withdrawn from the common life in their iron, sleepless world, they welcomed this break in their routine as much as she did the chance it gave her of a wholly unique experience. She told the tale of her adventures both in a letter to Mr. Ward and in notes written down at the time:

"*February* 16, 1916.

"Such a journey! Heavy snow-storm in the night, and we were held up for three hours on the highest part of the line between Kingussie and Aviemore. But at Invergordon a group of naval officers appeared. A great swell [Sir Thomas Jerram] detached himself and came up to me. 'Mrs. Ward? Sir John has asked me to look after you.' We twinkled at each other, both seeing the comedy of the situation. 'Now then, what can I do for you? Will you be at Invergordon pier to-morrow at eleven? and come and lunch with me on the Flagship? Then afterwards you shall see the destroyers come in and anything else we can show you. Will that suit you?' So he disappears and I journey on to Kildary, five miles, with a jolly young sailor just returned from catching contraband in the North Sea, and going up to Thurso in charge of the mail."

She spent a quiet evening at Sir John Jellicoe's house (the Admiral himself being away). Her notes continue the story:

"Looked out into the snowy moonlight—the Frith steely grey—the hills opposite black and white—a pale sky—black shapes on the water—no lights except from a ship on the inlet (the hospital ship).

"Next day—an open car—bitterly cold—through the snow and wind. At the pier—a young officer, Admiral Jerram's Flag Lieutenant. 'The Admiral wished to know if you would like him to take you round the Fleet. If so, we will pick him up at the Flagship.' The barge—very comfortable—with a cabin—and an outer seat—sped through the water. We stopped at the Flagship and the Admiral stepped in. We sped on past the *Erin*—one of the Turkish cruisers impounded at the beginning of the war—the *Iron Duke*, the *Centurion*, *Monarch*, *Thunderer*—to the hospital ship *China*. The Admiral pointed out the three cruisers near the entrance to the harbour—under Sir Robert Arbuthnot—also the hull of the poor *Natal*—with buoys at either end—two men walking on her.

"At luncheon—Vice-Admiral Sir Thomas Jerram on my left, Sir Robert Arbuthnot, commanding the cruiser squadron, on my right. Captain Field and Mrs. Field. Commander Goldie—Flag Lieutenant Boissier, and a couple of other officers and their wives.

"In the barge I had shown the Admiral Roosevelt's letter. Sir Robert Arbuthnot spoke to me about it at luncheon, and very kindly. They all seemed to feel that it was a tough task, not of my seeking, and showed wonderful sympathy and understanding. After lunch Captain Field was told off to show me the ship. Thrilling to see a ship in war-time, that might be in action any moment. The loading of the guns—the wireless rooms—the look down to the engine deck—the anchor held by the three great chains—the middies' quarters—the officers' ward-room. The brains of the ship—men trained to transmit signals from the fire-control above to all parts of the ship, directing the guns. The middies' chests—great black and grey boxes—holding all a middy's worldly goods. He opens one—shows the photos inside.—The senior middy, a fair-haired boy, like Humphry Sandwith—the others younger. Their pleasant room, with its pictures, magazines and books. Spaces where the wounded can be temporarily placed during action.

"The chart of the North Sea, and the ship-stations. Lines radiating out in all directions—every dot on them a ship.

"After going through the ship we went to look at the destroyer which the Admiral had ordered alongside. Commanded by Mr. Leveson-Gower, son of the Lord Granville who was Foreign Secretary, and nephew of 'Freddy.' The two torpedo tubes on the destroyer are moved to the side, so that we see how it discharges them. The guns very small—the whole ship, which carries 100 men, seems almost on the water-line—is constantly a-wash except for the cabin and the bridge. But on a dark night in the high seas, 'we are always so glad to see them!—they are the guards of the big ships—or we are the hens, and they are the chickens.'

"Naval character—the close relations between officers and men necessitated by the ship's life. 'The men are splendid.' How good they are to the officers—'have a cup of coffee, sir, and lie down a bit.'—Splendidly healthy—in spite of the habitually broken sleep. Thursday afternoons (making and mending)—practically the naval half-holiday.

"Talk at tea with Captain and Mrs. Field and Boissier and Commander Goldie. They praise the book, *Naval Occasions*. No sentiment possible in the Navy—*in speech*. The life could not be endured often, unless it were *jested through*. Men meet and part with a laugh—absurdity of sentimental accounts. Life on a destroyer—these young fellows absolute masters—their talk when they come in—'By Jove, I nearly lost the ship last night—awful sea—I was right on the rocks.'—Their life is always in their hands."

Writing a week later to "Aunt Fan," she added one further remark about the Captain of the ship—"so quietly full of care for his men—and so certain, one could see, that Germany would never actually give in without trying something desperate against our fleet." Little more than three months later, Germany tried her desperate stroke, tried it and lost, but at what a cost to English sailormen! The noble officer who had sat next to Mrs. Ward at luncheon in the Admiral's flagship, Sir Robert Arbuthnot, went down with his battle-cruiser, while on either side of him occurred the losses which shook, for one terrible day, England's faith in her fleet. Mrs. Ward wrote on June 6 to Katharine Lyttelton:

"Yes, indeed, Sir Robert Arbuthnot's cruiser squadron was at Cromarty when I was there, and he sat next me at luncheon on the Flagship. I *particularly* liked him—one of those modest, efficient naval men whose absolute courage and nerve, no less than their absolute humanity, one would trust in any emergency. I remember Sir Thomas Jerram, on my other side, saying in my ear—'The man to your right is one of the most rising men in the Navy.' And the line of cruisers in front of the Dreadnoughts, as I saw them in the February dawn, stretching towards the harbour entrance, will always remain with me."

Meanwhile the preparations for her journey to France had been pushed forward by "Wellington House," so that only four days after her return from Invergordon all was ready for her departure for Le Havre. She went (this time with Dorothy) as the guest of the Foreign Office, recommended by them to the good offices of the Army. She was first to be given some idea of the vast organization of the Base at Le Havre, and then sent on by motor to Rouen, Abbeville, Étaples and Boulogne. A programme representing almost every branch of the unending activities of the "Back of the Army" had been worked out for her, but she was warned that she could not be allowed to enter the "War Zone." Once in France, however, it was not long before this prohibition broke down, though not through any importunity of hers.

The marvellous spectacle unrolled itself before her, quietly and methodically, while her guides expounded to her the meaning of what she saw and the bearing of every movement at the Base upon the lives of the men in the front line. General Asser himself, commanding at Le Havre, devoted a whole afternoon to taking her through the docks and store-sheds of the port, "so that one had a dim idea," as she wrote to her husband, "of the amazing organization that has sprung up here. It explains a good deal, too, of the five millions a day!" But as a matter of fact, the thing which impressed her most at Le Havre was the 'make-over department,' where all the rubbish brought down from the Front, from bully-beef tins to broken boots, was collected together and boiled down (metaphorically speaking)

into something useful, so that many thousands a week were thus saved to the taxpayer at home. "All the creation of Colonel Davies, who has saved the Government thousands and thousands of pounds. Such a thing has never been done before!" Similarly, at Rouen (whither she drove on February 26—fifty miles—through blinding snow) she was fascinated by the motor-transport department—"the biggest thing of its kind in France—the creation of one man, Colonel Barnes, who started with 'two balls of string and a packet of nails,' and is now dealing with 40,000 vehicles."

Another snowy and Arctic drive from Rouen to Dieppe, and on to Abbeville, where a wonderful piece of news awaited them.

To T. H. W.

"*February* 29, 1916.

. . . "After lunch Colonel Schofield [their guide] went out to find the British Headquarters and report. Dorothy and I went up to the cathedral, and on emerging from it met the Colonel with another officer, who introduced himself as Colonel Dalrymple White, M.P. 'I have news for you, Mrs. Ward, which I think will change your plans!' I looked at him rather aghast, wondering if I was to be suddenly sent home! 'There is an invitation for you from G.H.Q., and we have been telephoning about, trying to find you. Great luck that Colonel Schofield looked in just now.' Whereupon it appeared that 'by the wish of the Foreign Office,' G.H.Q. had invited me for two days, and that an officer would call for me at Boulogne on Wednesday morning, and take me to the place which no one here mentions but with bated breath, and which I will not write! [St. Omer.] I was naturally thrilled, but I confess I am in terror of being in their way, and also of not being able to write anything the least adequate to such an opportunity. However it could not of course be refused."

A long day at Étaples intervened between this little scene and the arrival at G.H.Q.—a day devoted not only to an inspection of some of the great hospitals, but also to a more unusual experience. Étaples was the scene of a huge training-camp where troops from England received their

final " polish " before going up to the Front ; amongst other things, they were taught how to throw bombs, and Mrs. Ward was taken to see them do it. " We climb to the very top of the slope," she wrote in her journal at the time, " and over its crest to see some live bomb-practice. A hollow in the sand, three dummy figures twenty yards away—a parapet and a young soldier with three different bombs, that explode by a time-fuse. He throws—we crouch low behind the parapet of sand-bags—a few seconds, then a fierce report. We rise. One of the dummy figures is half wrecked, only a few fragments of the bomb surviving. One thinks of it descending in a group of men, and one remembers the huge hospitals behind us. War begins to seem to me more and more horrible and intolerable."

The next day, March 1, they were taken in charge at Boulogne by Captain H. C. Roberts, sent thither by G.H.Q. to fetch them, and motored through a more spring-like land to St. Omer, where they took up their quarters for two nights in the " Visitors' Château " (the Château de la Tour Blanche). Captain Roberts said that his orders were to take them as near to the battle-line as he safely could, and accordingly they started out early in the afternoon in the direction of Richebourg St. Vaast, calling on the way at Merville, the headquarters of General Pinney and the 35th Division. The General came out to see his visitors and said that, having an hour to spare, he would take them to the Line himself. He and Mrs. Ward went ahead in the General's car, Dorothy and Captain Roberts following behind. At Richebourg St. Vaast the road became so much broken by shell-holes that they got out and walked, and General Pinney informed Mrs. Ward calmly that she was now " actually in the battle," for the British guns were bellowing from behind them. Early the next morning she wrote down the following notes of what ensued :

> " Richebourg St. Vaast—a ruined village, the church in fragments—a few walls and arches standing. The crucifix on a bit of wall untouched. Just beyond, General Pinney captured a gunner and heard that a battery was close by to our right. We were led there through seas of mud. Two bright-faced young officers. One gives me a hand through the mud, and down into the dug-out of the gun. There it is—its muzzle just showing in the dark,

nine or ten shells lying in front of it. One is put in We stand back and put our fingers in our ears. An old artillery-man says 'Look straight at the gun, ma'am.' It fires—the cartridge-case drops out. The shock not so great as I had imagined. Has the shell fallen on a German trench, and with what result! They give us the cartridge-case to take home.

"After firing the gun we walked on along the road. General Pinney talks of taking us to the entrance of the communication-trench. But Captain Roberts is obviously nervous. The battery we have just left crashes away behind us, and the firing generally seems to grow hotter. I suggest turning back, and Captain Roberts approves. 'You have been nearer the actual fighting than any woman has been in this war—not even a nurse has been so close,' says the General. Neuve Chapelle a mile and a half away to the north behind some tall poplars. In front within a mile, first some ruined buildings—immediately beyond them our trenches—then the Germans, within a hundred yards of each other.

"As we were going up, we had seen parties of men sitting along the edge of the fields, with their rifles and field kit beside them, waiting for sunset. Now, as we return, and the sun is sinking fast to the horizon, we pass them—platoon after platoon—at intervals—going up towards the trenches. The spacing of these groups along the road, and the timing of them, is a difficult piece of staff-work. The faces of the men quiet and cheerful, a little subdued whistling here and there—but generally serious. And how young! 'War,' says the General beside me, 'is crass folly! *crass* folly! nothing else. We want new forms of religion—the old seem to have failed us. Miracle and dogma are no use. We want a new prophet, a new Messiah!'"

Mrs. Ward left her new friend with a feeling of astonishment at having found so kindred a spirit in so strange a scene.

The next day they were up betimes and on their way to Cassel and Westoutre, there to obtain permits, at the Canadian headquarters, for the ascent of the Scherpenberg Hill, in order that Mrs. Ward might behold Ypres and the Salient. There had been a British attack, that morning,

in the region of the Ypres–Comines Canal; it had succeeded, and there was a sense of elation in the air. But, by an ironic chance, Mrs. Ward had heard by the mail that reached the Château a far different piece of news, and as she drove through the ruined Belgian villages—through Poperinghe and Locre—dodging and turning so as to avoid roads recently shelled, her mind was filled with one overmastering thought—the death of Henry James, her countryman.[1]

But now they are at the foot of the Scherpenberg Hill. Her journal continues:

"A picket of soldiers belonging to the Canadian Division stops us, and we show our passes. Then we begin to mount the hill (about as steep as that above Stocks Cottage), but Captain Roberts pulls me up, and with various halts at last we are on the top, passing a dug-out for shelter in case of shells on the way. At the top a windmill—some Tommies playing football. Two stout lasses driving a rustic cart with two horses. We go to the windmill and, sheltering behind its supports (for nobody must be seen on the sky-line), look out north-east and east. Far away on the horizon the mists lift for a moment, and a great ghost looks out—the ruined tower of Ypres. You see that half its top is torn away. A flash! from what seem to be the ruins at its base. Another! It is the English guns speaking from the lines between us and Ypres—and as we watch, we see the columns of white smoke rising from the German lines as they burst. Then it is the German turn, and we see a couple of their shells bursting on our lines, between Vlamertinghe and Dickebusch. Hark—the rattle of the machine-guns from, as it were, a point just below us to the left, and again the roar of the howitzers. There, on the horizon, is the ridge of Messines, Wytschœte, and near by the hill and village of Kemmel, which has been shelled to bits. Along that distant ridge run the German trenches, line upon line. One can see them plainly without a glass. At last we are within actual sight of the *Great Aggression*—the nation and the army which have defied the laws of God and man, and left their fresh and damning mark to all time on the history of Europe

[1] Henry James had become a naturalized British subject in July, 1915.

and on this old, old land on which we are looking. In front of us the Zillebeke Lake, beyond it Hooge—Hill 60 lost in the shadows, and that famous spot where, on the afternoon of November 11, the ' thin red line ' withstood the onset of the Prussian Guard. The Salient lies there before us, and one's heart trembles thinking of all the gallant life laid down there, and all the issues that have hung upon the fight for it."

So, with gas-helmets in hand, they retraced their steps down the hill, finding at the bottom that the kind Canadian sentries had cut steps for Mrs. Ward down the steep, slippery bank, and on to see General Plumer at Cassel. With him and with Lord Cavan—the future heroes of the Italian War—Mrs. Ward had half an hour's memorable talk, returning afterwards to the Visitors' Château in time to pack and depart that same evening for Boulogne. Next day they sailed in the " Leave boat "—" all swathed in life-belts, and the good boat escorted (so wrote D. M. W.) by a destroyer and a torpedo-boat, and ringed round with mine-sweepers ! " In such pomp of modern war did Mrs. Ward return.

It now remained for her to put into shape the impressions gathered in these five breathless weeks, and this she did during some forty-five days of work at very high pressure, putting what she had to say into the form of " Letters to an American Friend." The Letters were sent hot to the Press on the American side as quickly as Mrs. Ward could mail them, appearing in a number of newspapers controlled by one of the great " Syndicates " ; then Scribner's published them in book form at the end of May, with a preface by Mr. Choate. Here, with a little more leisure for revision, the little book, under the title of *England's Effort*, came out on June 8, incidentally giving to Mrs. Ward the pleasant opportunity of a renewal of her old acquaintance with Lord Rosebery, whom she had invited to write a preface to it. She went over, full of doubt, to Mentmore one May afternoon, having heard that he was there, " quite alone " (as she wrote to M. Chevrillon), " driving about in a high mid-Victorian phaeton, with a postilion ! " Knowing that he was never strong, she fully expected a refusal, but found instead that he had already done what she asked, being deeply moved by the proofs that she had sent him.

She was much touched, and the friendship was cemented, a few days later, by a return visit that he paid to Stocks, all in its May green, when he could not contain himself on the beauty of the place, or the incomparable advantages it possessed over " such a British Museum as Mentmore ! "

England's Effort reached a dejected world in the nick of time. Our national habit of " grousing " in public, and of hanging our dirty linen on every possible clothes-line, had naturally disposed both ourselves and the outer world to under-estimate our vast achievements. This little book set us right both with the home front and with our foreign critics. It penetrated into every corner of the world and was translated into every civilized language, while Mrs. Ward constantly received letters about it, not only from friends, but from total strangers—from dwellers in Mexico, South America, Japan, Australia and India, not to mention France and Italy, thanking her for her immense service, and expressing astonishment at the facts that she had brought to light. The *Preussische Jahrbücher* reviewed it with great respect ; the Japanese Ambassador, Viscount Chinda, was urgently recommended by King George to read it, and afterwards contributed a preface to the Japanese edition. And, as Principal Heberden of Brasenose reported to her, the burden of comment among his friends always ended with the feeling that " the most remarkable fact about the book is Mrs. Humphry Ward's own astonishing effort. Certainly the nation owes her much, for no other author could have attracted so much attention in America." A year later, it was asserted by many Americans, with every accent of conviction, that but for *England's Effort* and the public opinion that it stirred, President Wilson might have delayed still longer than he did in bringing America in.

In all the business arrangements made for the " little book " in America, Mrs. Ward had had the constant help and support of her beloved cousin, Fred Whitridge, while in England not only the publication, but the voluminous arrangements for translation, were in the hands of Reginald Smith. By a cruel stroke of fate, both these devoted friends were taken from her in the same week—the last week of December, 1916—and Mrs. Ward was left to carry on as best she might, without " the tender humour and the

fire of sense " in the " good eyes " of the one, or the wisdom, strength and kindness that had always been her portion in so rich a measure from the other. To Mrs. Smith (herself the daughter of George Murray Smith), she wrote after the funeral of " Mr. Reginald " :

> " I watched in Oxford Street, till the car had passed northwards out of sight, and said good-bye with tears to that good man and faithful friend it bore away. . . . Your husband has been to me shelter and comfort, advice and help, through many years. I feel as if a great tree had fallen under whose boughs I had sheltered. . . "

Never was the writing of books the same joy to Mrs. Ward after this. Other publishers arose with whom she established, as was her wont, good and friendly relations, but with the death of Reginald Smith it was as if a veil had descended between her and this chief solace of her declining years.

Already, in the autumn of 1916, Mrs. Ward was thinking —in consultation with Wellington House—of a possible return to France, mainly in order, this time, to visit some of the regions behind the French front which had suffered most cruelly in 1914. She wished to bring home to the English-speaking world, which was apt to forget such things, some of the undying wrongs of France. M. Chevrillon obtained for her the ear of the French War Office, and meanwhile Mrs. Ward applied once more to Sir Edward Grey and to General Charteris, head of the British Intelligence Department in France (with whom she had made friends on her first journey) for permission to spend another two or three days behind the British front. Here, however, the difficulty arose that since Mrs. Ward's first visit, some other ladies, reading *England's Effort*, had been clamorous for the same privileges, so that the much-tried War Office had been obliged to lay down a rigid rule against the admission of " any more ladies," as Sir Edward Grey wrote, " within the military zone of the British Armies." Sir Edward did not think that any exception could be made, but not so General Charteris. On November 9, Lord Onslow, then serving in the War Office, wrote to Mrs. Ward that :

> " General Charteris fully recognizes the valuable effect

which your first book produced upon the public, and would consequently expect similar results from a further work of yours. He is, therefore, disposed to do everything in his power to assist you, and he thinks it possible that perhaps an exception to the general rule might be made on public grounds. But it would have to be clearly understood that in the event of your being allowed to go, it would not constitute a precedent as regards any other ladies."

Permits, in the form of "Adjutant-General's Passes," were therefore issued to Mrs. Ward and her daughter for a visit to the British Military Zone from February 28 to March 4, 1917. They crossed direct to Boulogne, and were the guests of General Headquarters from the moment that they set foot in France.

Since their last visit, the Battle of the Somme had come and gone, and the German Army was in the act of retreating across that tortured belt of territory to the safe shelter of the Hindenburg Line, there to resist our pressure for another year. But, in these weeks of early spring, the elation of movement had gripped our Army; the Boche was in retreat; this must, this *should* be the deciding year! Mrs. Ward's letters from the war zone are full of this spirit of hopefulness; not yet had Russia crumbled in pieces, not yet had the strength of the shortened German line revealed itself. Once more she was sent on two memorable days, from the Visitors' Château at Agincourt, to points of vital interest on our line, first through St. Pol, Divion and Ranchicourt, to the wooded slope of the Bois de Bouvigny, whence she could gaze across at the Vimy Ridge, not yet stormed by the Canadians; then, on the second day, to the very centre of the Somme battlefield, where she stood in the midst of the world's uttermost scene of desolation. Of the Bois de Bouvigny, Dorothy's narrative, written down the same night, gives the following picture:

"The car bumped slowly along a very rough track into the heart of the wood, and stopped when it could go no farther. We got out and walked on till soon we came to an open piece of grass-land, a rectangular wedge, as it were, driven from the eastern edge of the hill into the heart of the wood. We walked across it, facing east, and saw it was pitted with shell-holes, mostly old—but

not all. In particular, one very large one had fresh moist earth cast up all round it. Captain Fowler [their guide] asked Captain Bell a question about it, lightly, yet with a significant *appui* in his tone—but the young man laughed off the question and implied that the Boches had grown tired of troubling that particular place. Meanwhile, the firing of our own guns behind and to the side of us was becoming more frequent, the noise greater. Just ahead, and to the right, the ground sloped to a valley, which we could not see, and where we were told lay Ablain St. Nazaire and Carençy. From this direction came the short, abrupt, but quite formidable reports of trench-mortars. Over against us, and slightly to the right, three or four ridges and folds of hill lay clearly distinguishable—of which the middle back was the famous *Vimy Ridge*, partly held to this day by the Germans. Captain Bell, however, would not let us advance quite to the edge of the plateau, so that we never saw exactly how the ground dropped to the lower ground, neither did we see the crucifix of Notre Dame de Lorette at the end of the spur. All this bit had been the scene of terrific fighting in 1915, when it still formed part of the French line ; it had been a fight at close quarters in the beautiful wood that closed in the open ground on which we stood, and we were told that many bodies of poor French soldiers still lay unburied in the wood. We turned soon to recross the bare space again, and as we did so, fresh guns of our own opened fire, and once more I heard that long-drawn scream of the shells over our heads that I got to know last year."

On both these days, the " things seen," unforgettable as they were, were filled out by most interesting conversations with two of our Army Commanders—first with General Horne and then with Sir Henry Rawlinson, who entertained Mrs. Ward and her daughter with a kindness that had in it an element of pathos. Not often, in those stern days, did anyone of the gentler sex make and pour out their tea ! And in the Chauffeurs' Mess, the Scotch chauffeur, Sloan, who for the second time was in charge of Mrs. Ward, found himself the object of universal curiosity. " He told Captain Fowler," wrote Mrs. Ward to her husband, " that they asked him innumerable questions about the two ladies

—no one having ever seen such a phenomenon in these parts before. 'They were varra puzzled,' said Sloan, 'they couldna mak' it out. But I didna tell them. I left them thinkin'!'"

Mrs. Ward left the British zone for Paris on March 4, and after three days of comparative rest there—renewing old acquaintance under strange new conditions—she put herself under the charge of a kind and energetic official of the "Maison de la Presse," M. Ponsot, for her long-planned visit to the devastated regions of the Centre and East. Soissons, Reims and Verdun were pronounced too dangerous for her, but she went north to the ruins of Senlis, and heard from the lips of the old curé the horrible tale of the German panic there, in the early days of September, 1914, the burning of the town, the murder of the Maire and the other hostages, and of the frantic, insane excitement under which many of the German officers seemed to be labouring. Then it was the battlefield of the Ourcq, the scene of Maunoury's fateful flank attack, which forced Von Kluck to halt and give battle at the Marne; a string of famous villages—Marcilly, Barcy, Etrépilly, Vareddes—seen, alas, under a blinding snow-storm, and at length the vision of the Marne itself, "winding, steely-grey, through the white landscape." Mrs. Ward has described it all, in inimitable fashion, in the seventh and eighth Letters of *Towards the Goal*, and has there told also the ghastly tale of the Hostages of Vareddes, which burnt itself upon her mind with the sharpness that only the sight of the actual scene could give. Then, leaving Paris by train for Nancy, she spent two days—seeing much of the stout-hearted Préfet, M. Mirman—in visiting the regions overwhelmed by the German invasion between August 20 and September 10, 1914—a period and a theatre of the War of which we English usually have but the dimmest idea. From the ruined farm of Léaumont she was shown, by a French staff officer, the whole scene of these operations, spread like a map before her, and became absorbed in the thrilling tale of the driving back of the Bavarians by General Castelnau and the First French Army. Then southward through the region from which the German wave had receded, but which still bore indelible marks of the invaders' savage fear and hatred. In *Towards the Goal* Mrs. Ward has told the

tale of Gerbévillers and of the heroic Sœur Julie, who saved her " gros blessés " in the teeth of some demoralized German officers, who forced their way into the hospital. Here we can but give her general impressions of the scene, as she recorded them in a letter to Miss Arnold, written from Paris immediately afterwards :

> " Lorraine was in some ways a spectacle to wring one's heart, the ruined villages, the *réfugiés* everywhere, and the faces of men and women who had lost their all and seen the worst horrors of human nature face to face. But there were many beautiful and consoling things. The marvellous view from a point near Lunéville of the eastern frontier, the French lines and the German, near the Forêt de Paroy—a group of some hundreds of French soldiers, near another point of the frontier, who, finding out that we were two English ladies, cheered us vigorously as we passed through them—the already famous Sœur Julie, of Gerbévillers, who had been a witness of all the German crimes there, and told the story inimitably, with native wit and Christian feeling—the beautiful return from Nancy on a spring day across France, from East to West, passing the great rivers, Meurthe, Meuse, Moselle, Marne—the warm welcome of the Lorrainers—these things we shall never forget."

A rapid return to England and then, in order that her impressions of the Fleet might not be behindhand, she was sent by special arrangement to see Commodore Tyrwhitt, at Harwich, there to realize the immense development of the smaller craft of the Navy, and to go " creeping and climbing," as she describes it in *Towards the Goal*, about a submarine. Returning to Stocks to write her second series of " Letters "—now addressed without disguise to Mr. Roosevelt—it was not long before the news of America's Declaration of War came in to cheer her, with an eager telephone-message from a daughter, left in London, that " Old Glory " was to be seen waving side by side with the Union Jack from the tower of the House of Lords. Now surely, the happy prophecies of her soldier-friends in France would be fulfilled : this *must* be the deciding year ! But the months passed on ; Vimy and Messines were ours, yet nothing followed, and in August, September, October, the agonizing struggle in the mud of Passchendæle sapped the

endurance of the watchers at home more miserably than any other three months of the War. And there, on October 11, perished a lad of twenty, bearing a name that was heart of her heart to Mrs. Ward, Tom Arnold, the elder son of her brother, Dr. F. S. Arnold. He had lain wounded all night in a shell-hole, and when at length they bore him back to the Casualty Clearing-station, the little flame of life, though it flickered and shot upwards in hope, sank again into darkness. Tom was a lad to whose gentle soul all war was utterly abhorrent, yet he had " joined up " without question on the earliest possible day. Already Christopher and Arthur Selwyn, the splendid twins, were gone, and the sons of so many friends and neighbours, gentle and simple ! About this time General Horne had invited her to come once more to France. " But it is not at all likely I shall go (she wrote)—though, perhaps, in the spring it might be, if the War goes on. Horrible, horrible thought ! I am more and more conscious of its horror and hideousness every day. And yet after so much—after all these lives laid down—not to achieve the end, and a real ' peace upon Israel '—would not that be worst of all ? "

CHAPTER XV

LAST YEARS: 1917–1920

αὐτὰρ ἐμεῦ σχεδόθεν μόρος ἵσταται· ὡς ὄφελόν γε
χειρὶ φίλην τὴν σὴν χεῖρα λαβοῦσα θανεῖν.[1]

DAMAGETUS.

THOSE who visited Mrs. Ward at Stocks during the later years of the War were wont to fasten upon any younger members of the family who happened to be there, to declare that Mrs. Ward was working herself to death and to plead that something must be done to stop her. And even as they said it they knew that their words were vain, for besides the perennial need to make a living, was not her country at war and were not the young men dying every day? Mrs. Ward was not of the temperament that forgot such things; hence her desire to throw her very best work into her "War books"—which owing to their low price and the special terms on which she allowed the Government to use them could never bring her anything like the same return as her novels.[2] She regarded them

[1] My doom hath come upon me, and would to God that I
Had felt my hand in thy dear hand on the day I had to die.
Sir Rennell Rodd's translation, in
Love, Worship and Death.

[2] Col. John Buchan, Director of the Ministry of Information, wrote to her in December 1918, as follows:

MY DEAR MRS. WARD,

As the Ministry of Information ceases its operations on Dec. 31st, I am taking this opportunity of writing to express to you, on behalf of the Ministry, our very cordial gratitude for the help which you have given so generously. It would have been almost impossible to essay the great task of enlightening foreign countries as to the justice of the Allied cause and the magnitude of the British effort without the co-operation of our leading writers, and we have been most fortunate in receiving that co-operation in full and ungrudged measure. To you in particular we are

therefore almost as an extra on her ordinary work, so that the pressure on her time was increased rather than diminished as the War years went on and her own age advanced. And the last of the series, *Fields of Victory*, was to make on her time and strength the greatest demands of all.

But the lighter side of her War labours was the intense and meticulous interest she took in the "War economies" devised by herself and Dorothy at Stocks. How they schemed and planned about the cutting of timber, the growing of potatoes, the making of jam and the sharing of the garden fruit with the village! Labour in the garden was reduced to a minimum, so that all the family must take their turn at planting out violas and verbenas, if the poor things were to be saved for use at all, while Mr. Wilkin, the well-beloved butler who had been with us for twenty years, mowed the lawn and split wood and performed many other unorthodox tasks until he too was called up, at 47, in the summer of 1918. Mrs. Ward could not plant verbenas, but she armed herself with a spud and might often be seen of an afternoon valiantly attacking the weeds in the rose-beds and paths. The links between her and the little estate seemed to grow ever stronger as she came to depend more and more directly on the produce of the soil, and when, in 1918, she established a cow on what had once been the cricket-ground her joy and pride in the productiveness of her new creature were a delight to all beholders. Her daughter Dorothy was at this time deep in the organisation of "Women on the Land"—a movement of considerable importance in Hertfordshire—, so that Mrs. Ward could study it at first hand and had many an absorbing conversation with one of the "gang-leaders," Mrs. Bentwich, who made Stocks her headquarters for a time and delighted her hostess by her many-sided ability and by the picturesqueness of her attire. All this gave her many ideas for her four War novels—*Missing, The War and Elizabeth, Cousin Philip* and *Harvest*, the last of which was to close the long list of her books. *Missing* had a considerable popular success, for it sold 21,000 in America in the first two months of its

indebted for generous concessions with regard to the use of your books and writings, and I beg that you will accept this message of gratitude from myself and from the other members of the Staff.'

H.W.

appearance, but *Elizabeth* and *Cousin Philip* were, I think, felt to be the most interesting of this series, owing to the admirable studies they presented of the type of young woman thrown up and moulded by the War. Mrs. Ward was by no means ashamed of her hard work as a novelist in these days.

"I have just finished a book," she wrote to her nephew, Julian Huxley, in April 1918, "and am beginning another—as usual! But I should be lost without it, and it is what my betters, George Sand and Balzac—and Scott!—did before me. Literature is an honourable profession, and I am no ways ashamed of it—as a profession. And indeed I feel that novels have a special function nowadays—when one sees the great demand for them as a *délassement* and refreshment. I wish with all my heart I could write a good detective—or mystery—novel! That is what the wounded and the tired love."

But, side by side with this immense output of writing, Mrs. Ward never allowed the springs of thought to grow dry for lack of reading. The one advantage that she gained from her short nights—for her hours of sleep were rarely more and often less than six—was that the long hours of wakefulness in the early morning gave her time for the reading of many books and of poetry. "There is nothing like it for keeping the streams of life fresh," she wrote to one of us. "At least that is my feeling now that I am beginning to grow old. All things pass, but thought and feeling! And to grow cold to poetry is to let that which is most vital in our being decay. I seem to trace in the men and women I see whether they keep their ideals and whether they still turn to imagination, whether through art or poetry. And I believe for thousands it is the difference between being happy and unhappy—between being 'dans l'ordre' or at variance with the world."

In addition to her novels and her two first War books, Mrs. Ward had been writing at intervals, ever since the summer of 1916, her *Recollections*, and brought them out at length in October 1918. They covered the period of her life down to the year 1900, giving a picture of things seen and heard, of friends loved and enjoyed and lost, of long-past Oxford days, of London, Rome, and the Alban Hills, such as only a woman of her manifold experience could offer to

a tired generation. The reception given to the book touched her profoundly, for it showed her, beyond the possibility of doubt, that her long life's work had earned her not only the admiration but the love of her fellow-countrymen. As an old friend, Mrs. Halsey, wrote to Dorothy, " I remember Mlle Souvestre saying more than thirty years ago, ' Ah ! the books I admire—but it's the woman Mary Ward that I love.' " " Mrs. Ward's Recollections are of priceless value," said the *Contemporary Review* ; " all the famous names are here, but that is nothing ; the people themselves are here moving about and veritably alive—great men and women of whom posterity will long to hear." And another reviewer dwelt on a different aspect : " She has lived to see the first social studies and efforts of her Oxford days grow into the Passmore Edwards Settlement, the Schools for the Physically Defective, the Play Centres and a great deal else in which she has reaped a harvest for the England of to-day or sown a seed for the England of to-morrow." The reviews generally ended on a note of hope for a second volume, to complete the story—, but the story remained, and will always remain, uncompleted.

Perhaps part of the affectionate admiration with which her *Recollections* were received was due to the wider knowledge which the public at last possessed of all that she had been able to accomplish, through twenty years of toil, for the children of England. For it so happened that during the two years that preceded the appearance of her *Recollections* —years of war and difficulty of all kinds as they were— Mrs. Ward had seen her labours for the play-time of London's children crowned by that State recognition towards which she had always worked, and her hopes for the extension of Special Schools for crippled children to the provinces as well as London very largely realised. After an immensely up-hill struggle to maintain the funds for her Play Centres during the first two years of the War, it was at length the War conditions themsleves that convinced the authorities that all was not well with the child-population of our big cities and that such efforts as Mrs. Ward's must be encouraged and assisted in the fullest possible way. " Juvenile crime " —that comprehensive phrase that covers everything from pilfering at street corners to the formation of " Black-Hand-Gangs " under some adventurous spirit of ten or eleven,

gloriously devoted to terrorising the back streets after dark—was the portent that convinced Whitehall, that set the Home Office complaining to the Board of Education and the Board of Education consulting Mrs. Ward. The result of these consultations, carried on in the winter of 1916–17 between Mrs. Ward, Sir Amherst Selby-Bigge (the Permanent Secretary), Mr. Pease the outgoing and Mr. Fisher the incoming President of the Board, was that on Jan. 26, 1917, an official announcement appeared in *The Times* to the effect that "Grants from the Board of Education will shortly be available in aid of the cost of carrying on Play Centres . . . Hitherto Centres have been established only by voluntary bodies, mostly in London, where the Local Education Authority has granted the free use of school buildings. It is hoped that the powers which education authorities already possess of establishing and aiding such centres will be more freely exercised in future."

To which *The Times* added the following note :—"The announcement that the Treasury has approved the principle of play centres and will signify its approval in the usual manner, forms a fitting and characteristic climax to twenty years of voluntary effort on the part of Mrs. Humphry Ward and a devoted circle of workers."

There was general rejoicing among the higher officials of the Board, who had watched Mrs. Ward's work for so long, when the Treasury at length announced its consent to the Grant. Sir Amherst Selby-Bigge wrote to her in the following terms :

> "Allow me to congratulate you most heartily on having induced the State to take under its wing and aid the enterprise of which you have been the pioneer and which you have carried on unaided for so many years with such admirable results.
>
> "I do not think you are one of those who are nervous about State intervention or share the apprehension which is sometimes expressed that a free spirit of voluntary enterprise may be hampered or circumscribed by the existence of State aid. However this may be, I think you may feel sure that our grants and regulations will be administered in a sympathetic spirit and with full recognition that it is necessary to secure and retain the willing co-operation of people of all kinds who are anxious

to devote their time and energy to public service. It is a source of great pleasure to me that I have been the humble instrument of furthering the enterprise of which you have been the guiding spirit."

As a matter of fact, the Board's regulations were largely drawn up by Mrs. Ward herself, and her relations with both officials and President continued close and cordial—nay, almost affectionate !—down to the last day of her life. Nor was the London County Council left long behindhand. The Treasury Grant amounted to 50 per cent. of the " approved expenditure " of any voluntary committee or Education Authority which carried on Play Centres according to the Board's regulations, so that it was not long before some fifty great towns all over England were opening Play Centres of their own, under the Act of 1907, and London was in danger of being left behind. In the summer of 1919, however, Mrs. Ward's edifice was crowned by the Council's deciding to take over another quarter of the cost of her Centres, so that she was left with only one quarter to raise in voluntary funds. The whole of the organisation, however —which had long been perfected by the contriving brain of Miss Churcher—was left in Mrs. Ward's hands, subject only to inspection by the Council, for the Education Committee knew better than to disturb the result of so many years of specialised care and study. The additional funds available made it possible for Mrs. Ward, in the last three years of her life, to add ten new Centres in London to the twenty-two that she was maintaining before the advent of the Grant. It may be imagined what joy this gave to her, and how, in the winter of 1917–18, in spite of the cruelly-darkened streets and the danger of air-raids, she managed to make her way to many of these new Centres, lingering there in complete content to watch her singing children. The last phase of the Play Centre movement, as far as Mrs. Ward was concerned, was the publication by her daughter, in February 1920, of a little book describing their origin and growth,[1] with a preface written by Mrs. Ward herself. This she sent to Mr. Fisher, and received from him, a month before her death, a letter which deserves to be quoted here as a fitting epitaph on her work. Mr. Fisher and she had

[1] *Evening Play Centres for Children*, by Janet Penrose Trevelyan. Methuen & Co.

recently visited Oxford together, to speak at the opening of the "Arlosh Hall" at Manchester College.

> "Albert Dicey spoke to us, as you will remember," wrote Mr. Fisher, "of the abolition of religious tests in the Universities as belonging to that small category of reforms to which no discernible disadvantages attach and I am convinced that the same high and unusual compliment may be paid without a suspicion of extravagance to the Evening Play Centres. Here there are no drawbacks, nothing but positive and far-reaching good."

In the same way Mrs. Ward succeeded, in the spring of 1918, in persuading the House of Commons to add a clause to Mr. Fisher's great Education Bill, making it compulsory for Education Authorities throughout the country to "make arrangements" for the education of their physically defective children. She used for this purpose the machinery of the "Joint Parliamentary Advisory Council" which she had founded in 1913,[1] but the bulk of the work—involving as it did the sending out of circular letters to ninety-five Education Authorities, the sifting and printing of the replies and the forwarding of these to every Member of Parliament—was carried out from Stocks, causing a heavy strain—long remembered!—on the secretarial resources of the house. It may be noted too, that all this took place during those agonising weeks when the British Armies were being hurled back in France and Flanders, and when Mrs. Ward, of all people, realised only too clearly the peril we were in. But the task was accomplished and the clause added to the Bill, so that a new charter was thus provided for the 30,000 or so of crippled and invalid children who still remained throughout the country uneducated and uncared for.[2] A little later, the movement initiated by Sir Robert Jones and the Central Committee for the Care of Cripples, for converting some of the War Hospitals into Homes for the scientific treatment of crippled children received Mrs. Ward's

[1] See p. 241.

[2] Sir Robert Jones, F.R.C.S., Chairman of the Central Committee for the care of Cripples, wrote to Miss Ward after her mother's death: "One of the last pieces of work accomplished by Mrs. Ward for cripples was the insertion of the P.D. clause in the Fisher Education Act, and the reports obtained for that purpose are largely the groundwork and origin of this Committee, in whose work she took a deep interest."

warm support, her special contribution to the movement being a successful campaign for the provision of educational facilities for the children lying for many months within the hospital walls. The beautiful War-hospital at Calgarth on Lake Windermere (the Ethel Hedley Hospital) was converted to this use in the spring of 1920, and one of the last pleasures which Mrs. Ward enjoyed was her correspondence with the Governors of the hospital, who described to her their plan for the conversion and invoked her blessing upon it. Mrs. Ward was never able to visit Calgarth, but the love she bore to the fells and waters of the North which surrounded it have linked her memory very specially with this delightful place, where children who, even ten years before, would have been deemed hopeless cases, recover straightness and strength. Her connection with this enterprise made a gentle ending to her long labour for these waifs of our educational system.

Who that lived through the year 1918 will ever lose the memory of its gigantic vicissitudes? Mrs. Ward, with her actual knowledge of so much of the ground over which the battles of March and April raged, was certainly not among those who could shut their eyes to the national danger they involved. She tried to maintain her characteristic optimism throughout the blackest times, and was in the end justified. But I remember one afternoon at Grosvenor Place when a friend who thought that he was much "in the know" informed us confidentially that we were "out of Ypres—been out for the last two days, but they don't want to tell us," and hope sank very low. When the battle rolled up to the foot of her own Scherpenberg Hill she longed, I believe, to be there with a pike, but victory was ours that day and she felt a special lifting of the heart at the news. As the terrible pageant of the year unrolled itself, her heart went out to France in her losing struggle north of the Marne; to Italy in those anxious days of June, when after a first recoil she swept the Austrians permanently back over the Piave; to France again in the first great return towards Soissons and the Aisne. Was it the real turn of the tide? Hardly could we dare to believe it, but in the light of later events it became evident that the Italian stand on the Piave had indeed marked the turn for the whole Allied front. Mrs. Ward

always thought of this with peculiar satisfaction, for she was kept in constant touch with the situation out there by her son-in-law, George Trevelyan, who was in command of a British Red Cross Unit on the Italian front, and the disaster of Caporetto had very sadly affected her. Now all was well once more and Mrs. Ward, who had been no fair-weather friend to Italy, rejoiced with all her heart. There was much talk during the summer of a possible visit of hers, that autumn, to the Italian front, but events were destined to move too fast, and Mrs. Ward never again beheld the Lombard Plain.

But when the incredible hope had at last become solid fact—when the British Armies had stormed the Hindenburg Line and how much else beside, when the Americans had won through the forest of the Argonne and the French had pressed on to their ancient frontier ; when Stocks had been illuminated on Armistice Night and we had all settled down to speculation, more or less sober, on the remaking of the world, Mrs. Ward began to enquire from the authorities as to the possibility of a third and final journey to France. For she wished with almost passionate eagerness to write a third and final book on the last phase of " England's Effort." She was met once more with the greatest cordiality. Sir Douglas Haig expressed a desire to see her ; General Horne promised to send her over the battlefield of Vimy ; Lille, Lens and Cambrai were to reveal to her the tale of their four years of servitude. And, on their part, the French promised to convey her to Metz and Strasburg and to show her Verdun and Rheims on her return, while Paris was to be made easy for her by the hospitality of a delightful young couple, her cousins, Arnold Whitridge and his wife, who had the good fortune to possess a house there amid the rush and pressure of all the nations of the world.

So everything was planned and settled during the month of December 1918, but before she left England on her last mission Mrs. Ward was able to enjoy that strange Peace Christmas which, in spite of its superficial note of thanksgiving, seemed to ring for so many the final knell of joy. Just two months before, Mrs. Ward had lost, from the influenza scourge, yet another soldier-nephew, the youngest Selwyn boy, while sorrow had come to the house itself in the death at a training camp of her butler's only son—a lad

of 17 who had been the playmate of her grandchildren on many a golden afternoon in the days gone by. But if the elders could not forget these things, the children at least could be made an excuse for rejoicing! And so her two grandchildren, Mary and Humphry, came once more to Stocks as they had come for every Christmas since they entered this world; they mounted the big bed as of old and played the egg-game with solemn attention to detail, and then on the last day of the year Stocks opened its doors to the children from far and near, coming in fancy dress to dance out the Year of Miracles. Mrs. Ward, who had that very morning finished the writing of a novel, moved among the groups with a face the pallor of which, though we did not know it, was already a premonition of the end. She drank in the beauty of the scene in deep draughts of refreshment. That little boy attired as feathered Mercury—that slender Rosalind with the glorious bush of hair—they caught at her heart! From certain fragments of talk that she let fall during the evening one gathered that the sight had meant more to her than a mere joyous spectacle. To these would be the new world: let the elders leave it them in faith. "Green earth forgets."

Mrs. Ward's third journey to France was of longer duration (it lasted over three weeks, Jan. 7–30) than either of the others, and save that the conditions of danger created by the actual fighting were eliminated it was of a still more arduous nature, while it afforded her even greater opportunities than the others had done of realising and summing up the proportionate achievements of the three great armies—French, American and British. For the object of this final pilgrimage was no less than to bring out, by a careful analysis of all the available facts, the overwhelming part played by the British Armies in France in the last year of the War, and so to do her part in silencing the extraordinary misconceptions that were still current, especially in America, as to the share that the British Armies had had in the final breaking of the German resistance. A Canadian girl working at an American Y.M.C.A. in France had written to her in the previous August, imploring her to bring *England's Effort* up to date and to distribute it by the thousand among the American troops.

"I see hundreds of the finest remaining white men on earth every week," continued this witness. "They are wonderful military material and *very* attractive and lovable boys, but it discourages all one's hopes for future unity and friendship between us all to realize, as I have done the last few months, that the majority of these men are entering the fight firmly believing that 'England has not done her share,' 'the colonials have done all the hard fighting'—'France has borne all,' etc. This from not one or two, but *hundreds*. The men I speak of come principally from Kansas, Illinois, Iowa—that wonderful Valley of Democracy that I sometimes compare in my mind (with its safety and isolation from the outside world) to those words of Kipling—'Ringed by your careful seas, long have you waked in quiet and long lain down at ease'—To these boys away from the sheltered country for the first time in *generations*, England is a foreign and a somewhat mistrusted country, and four or five days rush through it gives them neither opportunity nor a fair chance of judging the people—beyond the fact that war-time restrictions annoy them. It is a crying shame that the *only* knowledge these splendid men have of England's share in the war is drawn from the belittling reports of pro-German papers. This attitude will mar all attempts at friendship between the troops, and, I believe, seriously jeopardise future friendship between the countries."

This first-hand evidence has recently received a very striking corroboration in Mr. Walter Page's Letters, and was amply borne out at the time by our Ministry of Information at home. Moreover, since August, Great Britain had indeed added another chapter to her previous record! So Mrs. Ward was received by Sir Douglas Haig, at his little château near Montreuil, on January 8, 1919, and there had a most illuminating talk with him, illustrated by his wonderful series of charts and maps; she went through the desolation of Ypres, and Lens, and Arras; she visited General Birdwood at Lille and General Horne at Valenciennes, renewing her friendship with the latter and making the aquaintance of his Chief of Staff, General Hastings Anderson, "a delightful, witty person, full of fun," who told her many things. She climbed the Vimy Ridge, "scrambling up over trenches and barbed wire and other *débris* to the top,"

assisted by Dorothy and Lieut. Farrer, their guide; she crossed the Hindenburg Line in both directions, the second time at the Canal du Nord, where she got out in the January twilight to study the marvellous German trench system and the tracks of two tanks that had led the attack of the First Army on September 27; she saw the area of open fighting beyond Cambrai, and, returning by the Cambrai–Bapaume road to Amiens, passed through a heap of shapeless ruins "where only a signboard told us that this had once been Bapaume." From Amiens she passed on to Paris, and thence to Metz and Strasburg, realising something, at Metz, of the difficulty confronting the French Government in the large German population, and at Strasburg passing a wholly delightful evening with General Gouraud—hero both of Gallipoli and of Champagne. Armed with General Gouraud's maps and passes she then returned via Nancy to Verdun and spent an unforgettable afternoon, first in inspecting the subterranean labyrinth under the old fortress which had given sleep to so many weary soldiers during the siege, and then in motoring slowly through the battlefield itself. It may be imagined how such names as Vaux, Douaumont, the Mort Homme, the Mont des Corbeils and the rest made her heart leap, how they stirred the vivid historic imagination in her which always enabled her to visualise, beyond her fellows, the actual movement of events and of the men who played their part in them. The sight of Verdun certainly affected her more deeply than anything, I think, save the Salient with its hundred thousand British graves. Then, sleeping at Châlons, she moved on to Rheims, arriving in the *Place* before what had once been the Cathedral in time to see the Prime Minister of England—a Sunday visitor from the Conference—standing before the battered façade in animated talk with Cardinal Luçon. Mrs. Ward stood aside to let them pass, watching the retreating figure of Mr. Lloyd George "with what thoughts." *This* was Rheims; what remedy for it would the Conference find?

Nor did Mrs. Ward neglect the American battle-fields, for on her way to Verdun she had passed through the St. Mihiel salient and studied the ground there; she had seen the Forêt de l'Argonne in the winter dusk after leaving Verdun, and now on her way to Paris she spent a cheerful hour at Château Thierry, mingling with the American boys

on the scene of their first and perhaps most memorable triumph. For actually to have helped by hard fighting, man to man, to keep the Boche from Paris, that was something for which to have crossed the Atlantic! St. Mihiel and the Argonne were all part of the great plan, but this, this was history! So at least Mrs. Ward felt as she crossed the sacred ground from Dormans to Château Thierry where the Germans had made their formidable push for Montmirail and Paris, and where an American regiment of marines had said them nay.

After her long pilgrimage Mrs. Ward spent a week in Paris, much absorbed in the pursuit of accurate information for the book that she had still to write. But there was also time for the seeing of many of those famous figures who, with the best intentions, filled the French stage for half a year and, at the end, gave us the world in which, *tant bien que mal*, we live. She went to consult with our ambassador, Lord Derby, on certain aspects of her work; she revived her old friendship with M. Jusserand; she saw General Pershing and Mr. Hoover, and, on the very day when the League of Nations resolution had been passed, President Wilson himself. Of this she has left a lively account in the first chapter of *Fields of Victory*.

Mrs. Ward should, by all the rules, have returned straight home from Paris, for she had already begun to suffer from bronchial catarrh and the weather had turned colder. But she was bent on seeing certain British officers at Amiens who had prepared some special information for her and therefore broke her journey there and also at the little "Visitors' Château" at Agincourt. Here, struggling against the intense cold and her own increasing illness, she exhausted herself in long conversations, though all that she heard was of deep interest to her task. But she was obliged to give up a visit to the battle-field of August 8 which her hosts had planned for her, and to return instead, while she still might, to England. When at last she reached home she was pronounced to have tonsilitis and to be within an inch of bronchitis too, and was kept in bed for many days. But it was many weeks before the bronchial catarrh left her, nor did she ever, during this last year of her life, regain the level of health at which she had started for France in the first week of the year. Yet none the less must her articles be written, for

time pressed if she was to catch the right moment for the book's appearance. She was ably and generously helped by various officers, especially by General Sir John Davidson, who brought with him to Grosvenor Place one day a reduced-scale version of the great chart at which she had gazed fascinated at Montreuil, and which she afterwards obtained leave to reproduce in her book. "It was amusing," wrote Dorothy that night, "to see Mother and Lady Selborne and Sir John Davidson all on the floor, poring over his wonderful chart of the War."

But in spite of the willingness to help of the authorities, the labour of studying and digesting the mass of material placed at her disposal—stiff and intractable stuff as it was—and of forming from it a harmonious and artistic whole was something far harder than she had expected. It required real historical method, and carried her back in memory to the days of the West Goths and the *Dictionary of Christian Biography*. But she would not be beaten, either by the difficulty of the task or by the necessity of getting it done within a certain time. One day in April, just after she had returned from Grosvenor Place to Stocks, it became necessary to send one of her articles, type-written, up to London in time to catch the Foreign Office bag for New York; the necessary train left Tring Station at 12.37. Mrs. Ward finished writing the article at 12.22; Miss Churcher, who had followed page by page with the type-writer, finished the last page at 12.30; Dorothy flew to the station with it and caught the train.

Besides the initial difficulty of the work, however, the necessity of submitting what she had written to two or three different authorities caused inevitable delays, while a printers' strike in Glasgow at the critical moment again deferred the book's publication. When, therefore, *Fields of Victory* at length appeared, the psychological moment had passed by, the world was far more concerned with the future than with the past, and only a moderate number of the book were sold. Mrs. Ward was of course somewhat disappointed, but there was much consolation to be had in the note of astonishment, combined with admiration, which the book called forth among those for whose opinion she really cared, whether in England, France or America. This feeling was summed up in a letter written by General

Hastings Anderson—then holding a high appointment on the Staff of the Army—to Miss Ward, after her mother's death.

"The book will be a very prized memento, not only of a gifted writer who did so much to bring home to the ignorant the whole significance of our effort in the war; but also of a great Englishwoman, and of the happy breaks in our work marked by her visits to the First Army in France.

"What strikes me most in your mother's book is her marvellous insight into the way of thinking of the soldiers —I mean those who knew most of what was really happening—who were actually engaged in the great struggle. One would say the book was written by one who had played a prominent part in the War in France, and with knowledge of the thoughts of the high directing staffs. This is no compliment; it can only come from the trained expression of a very deep sympathy, and complete understanding of the thoughts and views which were expressed to her by those high in command.

"I can well understand what a strain such intense concentration of thought must have meant, when combined with the fatigues of travel over great distances on the French roads, and the regrets and delays in publication. But the completed book and its predecessors are a very precious legacy, especially to those of us who saw the whole long struggle in France."

Mrs. Ward's health improved to a certain extent during the summer of this year (1919), so that she was able to enjoy on Peace Day (July 19) the great procession of Victory, watching it from the enclosure outside Buckingham Palace. "Foch saluting was a sight not to be forgotten," she wrote. "A paladin on horseback, saluting with a certain melancholy dignity—a figure of romance." But she was mainly at Stocks during all this summer, basking in the golden weather of that year, delighting in a few Sunday gatherings of friends and in the weekly visits of her grandchildren, who were now domiciled at Berkhamsted, five miles away, and whom nothing could keep away, on Sundays, from Stocks, with its tennis-court, its strawberries—and "Gunny"!

..."I shall always think of her particularly," wrote

Mrs. Robert Crawshay afterwards, " sitting in her garden that last beautiful summer at Stocks, with her wonderful expression of wisdom and the kindness that prevented anyone feeling rebuked by her being on a much higher level than themselves—her interest so generously given, her pain never mentioned, her eyes lighting up with love as the children came across the lawn, an atmosphere of beauty and peace all around her."

Much talk was heard on the lawn, as the summer passed on, about the peace terms and the prospects of any recovery in Europe, and it is recorded that although Mrs. Ward approved on the whole of the terms she thought it the height of unwisdom to have allowed the Germans no voice in discussing them before the signature. In Russia her heart was passionately with the various rebels who arose to dispute the tyranny of the Soviets, and as each hope faded she felt the horrors of that tragic land more acutely. But most of all did she feel the tragedy of the children of Austria and Central Europe, so that one of her last speeches was devoted to pleading, at Berkhamsted, the cause of the Save the Children Fund.[1] It was noticed that day how white and frail was her look, but all the more for that did her appeal find its way to the hearts of her audience. The children of Germany must be fed as well as the rest, she said; " we have no war with children," and she recalled the lovely lines of Blake which describe the angels moving through the night:

> " If they see any weeping
> That should have been sleeping
> They pour sleep on their head
> And sit down by their bed."

" There are hundreds of thousands of children at this moment who on these beautiful October nights ' are weeping that should have been sleeping '—It is for this country, it is for you and me, to play the part of angels of succour to these poor little ones wherever they may be, to feed and clothe and cherish them in the name of our common humanity and our common faith."

In the meantime the unrelenting pressure of war taxation on her own income had made it imperative, at last, to give

[1] On October 23, 1919.

up the house in Grosvenor Place which had been her London home for nearly thirty years. Mrs. Ward slept there for the last time on August 29, 1919, and wrote of her parting from it the next day to J. P. T.

> " The poor old house begins to look dismantled. I had many thoughts about it that last night there—of the people who had dined and talked in it—Henry James, and Burne-Jones, Stopford Brooke, Martineau, Watts, Tadema, Lowell, Roosevelt, Page, Northbrook, Goschen and so many more—of one's own good times, and follies and mistakes—everything passing at last into the words, ' He knoweth whereof we are made, He remembereth that we are but dust..' "

Then, in September, Mrs. Ward went for the last time to the Lake District, motoring there via Stratford-on-Avon in her " little car "—a cheap post-war purchase which spent most of its time in the repairing shop, but which, for this occasion, put forth a supreme effort and actually brought Mrs. Ward safely home through the midst of the railway strike. She made her headquarters at Grasmere, for which she had developed a special affection during two recent summers when she had taken " Kelbarrow " and had watched from its lawn every passing mood of the little lake. She visited Fox How and " Aunt Fan " almost every day ; she renewed her friendship with Canon and Mrs. Rawnsley and her life-long intimacy with Gordon Wordsworth. And, on the Langdale side of the fell, she visited a little grave to which her heart always yearned afresh.

Mrs. Ward was deeply interested, during these last months of her life, in the attempts made by the Liberal element in the Church to modify or retard the " Enabling Bill," or as it is now known, the Church Assembly Act. All her fighting spirit was aroused by the claim made by the Bill to lay down tests and distinctions between member and member of the National Church, especially by the imposition of the test of Holy Communion on all candidates for the new Church bodies. She feared, in the words of the Bishop of Carlisle (who saw eye to eye with her in this matter) " that the declaration required as a condition of membership of the Church of England will go a long way towards de-nationalising the Church and reducing it to the status of a

sect." She organised, early in December, a letter to *The Times* which was signed by all the most prominent names in Liberal Churchmanship, protesting against the scanty opportunities for debate which, owing to a ruling of the Speaker's, the measure was to have in the House of Commons. But, when it became law *quand même*, she turned her thoughts and her remaining energies to a constructive movement which might rally the scattered Liberal forces of the Church and assert for them the right, after due notice given of their opinions, to participate without dishonesty in the rite of Holy Communion. In a leaflet issued from Stocks to various private sympathisers in January 1920, Mrs. Ward pointed out that the difficulty which had confronted the Church sixty years before with regard to the Thirty-nine Articles had now passed on to the Creeds, and that to many who were convinced believers in the God within us, the following of Christ and the practical realisation of the Kingdom, the Nicene Creed was yet, "to quote a recent phrase, 'no more than the majority opinion of a Committee held 1,600 years ago.'" She therefore appealed for the formation of a "Faith and Freedom Association," the members of which might claim to take their part in the new Councils and Assemblies while openly stating their dissent from, or their right to re-interpret the Creeds; only so could the Church continue to include that Modernist element which was essential to its healthy development.

Mrs. Ward received a good deal of sympathy and encouragement from those to whom she sent her leaflet, and dreamt, in her indomitable way, of summoning a meeting later on if the response were sufficient. But she knew in her heart that her own strength would no longer suffice to lead such a crusade, and she appealed with a certain wistfulness to the young "to pour into it their life, their courage and their love." It troubled her that no young person or group arose to take the burden from her shoulders. But in truth she was still the youngest in heart of all her generation, or the next, and if it were not that the poor body was outworn she might yet have exerted the influence she longed for on the religious life of her country.

But it was too late. Mrs. Ward's health definitely gave way about Christmas-time, 1919, the breakdown taking the form of a violent attack of neuritis in the shoulders and arms.

Although she would not yet acknowledge it, but tried to continue the old round of work, increasing weakness made it plain to her, at length, that she must not, for the present at least, go crusading. But how she hoped and strove for better times! Her devoted doctor-brother, Frank Arnold, to whom she turned again and again with pathetic trust, knowing his ingenuity in the devising of remedies, tended her with a skill born of a life-long knowledge of her; but the malady was too deep-seated. At the end of January she moved to London in order to try a certain course of treatment, taking up her abode in a little house in Connaught Square which her husband and Dorothy had found for her. She liked the little place, especially on the days when flowers from Stocks arrived to make a bower of it, and there, in the midst of a fruitless round of "treatments" which did nothing but sap her remaining strength, she passed the last weeks of her life. Old friends came once more to visit her; her son and her daughters took turns in reading to her the poets that she loved; Miss Churcher brought for her delight the latest stories from the Play Centres. She still went downstairs and even, sometimes, out of doors, but those who came to the house to sit with her left it, usually, with aching hearts. Then, on March 11, another blow fell. Mr. Ward became dangerously ill, and an immediate operation was found to be necessary. The doctors carried him off to a nursing home not far away and performed it, successfully, that night, while Mrs. Ward sat below in the waiting-room in an agony of anxiety. The next day, and the next, she was still able to go to him, the porters carrying her upstairs to his room, but on Sunday, March 14, signs of bronchitis showed themselves, together with a grave condition of the heart. The doctors would not hear, after this, of her leaving the house.

So for ten days she lay in the little London bedroom, looking out over London trees, her heart pining for the day—the spring day which would surely come—when she and he would return to Stocks together and their ills would be forgotten. "Ah," she wrote to him in his nursing home on March 18, "it is too trying this imprisonment—but it ought only to be a few days more!"

And indeed, her release was nearer than she knew. Did she not know it? In mortal illness there are secrets of

the inner consciousness which those who tend, however lovingly, can never wholly penetrate, but as her mind advanced ever nearer to the verge, one felt that it was swept, ever and anon, by far-off gusts of poetry, finding expression in words and fragments long possessed and intimately loved. Such were the "Last Lines" of Emily Brontë, of which, two days before the end, she repeated the great second verse to Dorothy, saying with the old passionate gesture of the hands, "*That's* what I am thinking of!"

O God within my breast,
Almighty, ever-present Deity!
Life—that in me has rest,
As I—undying Life—have power in thee!

Then, early on the morning of the 24th, there came an hour of crisis, when life fought with death for victory; but, before the end, "she opened her dear eyes wide, her dear brown eyes, like the eyes of a young woman, and looked out into the unknown with a most wonderful look on her face. I think that at that moment her soul crossed the bar." So wrote Dorothy, the only witness of that look; she will carry the memory of it in her heart to the end.

We buried her in the quiet churchyard at Aldbury, within sight of the long sweep of hill and the beechwoods that she had loved so well. Her old friend the Rector, Canon Wood, laid her to rest, while another friend for whom she had had a deep regard, Dean Inge, spoke of her in simple and moving words, naming her before us all as "perhaps the greatest Englishwoman of our time."

There were not wanting, indeed, signs that many in England so regarded her. It was as though she had lived through the period, some ten years before, when the public had tired somewhat of her books and younger writers had to a large extent supplanted her, until, towards the end, she found herself taken to the heart of her countrymen in a manner that had hardly been her lot in the years of her greatest literary fame. They loved her not only for all that she had done, but for what she was, divining in her, besides her intellectual gifts, besides even the tenderness and sympathy of her character, that indomitable courage that carried her

through to the end, over difficulties and obstacles at which they only dimly guessed. They loved her for wearing herself out, at sixty-seven, in visits to the battle-fields of France, that she might bear her witness to her country's deeds; they loved her for all the joy that she had given to little children. Two months before her death the Lord Chancellor, making himself the mouthpiece of this feeling, had asked her to act as one of the first seven women magistrates of England, and later still, when she was already nearing the end, the University of Edinburgh invited her to receive the Honorary Degree of LL.D. These acts of recognition gave her a passing pleasure, and when she herself was beyond the reach of pleasure, or of pain, it stirred the hearts of those who went with her, for the last time, to the little village graveyard to see awaiting her, at the drive gate, a file of stalwart police, claiming their right to escort the coffin of a Justice of the Peace.

Many indeed were the tributes paid to her memory, whether in the letters received after her death or in the words uttered by Lord Milner and other old friends at the unveiling of her medallion in the Hall of the Passmore Edwards Settlement [1] (July 1922). Of these one only shall be quoted here, from a letter written to Mr. Ward by her dear and intimate friend of so many years' standing, André Chevrillon:

. . . "I had no friend in England whom I loved and respected more, none to whom I owed so much. I have often thought that if I love your country as I do—and indeed I have sometimes been accused of being biassed in my views of England—it was partly due to the personal gratitude which I always felt for the kindness of her greeting and hospitality when I came to England as a young man. The same generous welcome was extended to other young Frenchmen who have since written on England, and there is no doubt that it has helped to create long before the War a bond between our two countries.

"We all felt the spell of her noble and generous spirit. She struck one as the most perfect example of the English lady of the old admirable governing class, with her ever-active and efficient public spirit—of the highest English moral and intellectual culture. Though I had come to

[1] Now named, after its founder, the Mary Ward Settlement.

England several times before I met her—some thirty years ago—I had not yet formed a true idea of what that culture would be—though I had read of it in my uncle Taine's *Notes on England*. It was a revelation, though I must say I have never met one since with quite so complete a mental equipment, and that showed quite to the same degree those wonderful and, to others, beneficent qualities of radiant vitality, spirit and generosity. (It seems that these words must recur again and again when one speaks of her). She was one of those of whom a nation may well be proud.

"I remember our impression when her first great book came to us in Paris. Here was the true successor of George Eliot; she continued the great English tradition of insight into the spiritual world. The events in her novels were those of the soul—how remote from those which can be adapted from other writers' novels for the cinema!—The main forces that drove the characters like Fate were Ideas. She could *dramatise* ideas. I do not know of any novelist that gives one to the same degree the feeling that Ideas are living forces, more enduring than men, and in a sense more real than men—forces that move through them, taking hold of them and driving them like an unseen, higher Power."

On her tombstone we inscribed the lines of Clough, which she herself had written on the last page of *Robert Elsmere*:

> Others, I doubt not, if not we,
> The issue of our toils shall see,
> And, they forgotten and unknown,
> Young children gather as their own
> The harvest that the dead had sown.

THE PUBLISHED WORKS OF MRS. HUMPHRY WARD

Title.	*Date of Publication.*
Milly and Olly, or A Holiday among the Mountains	May, 1881
Miss Bretherton	November, 1884
Amiel's Journal	December, 1885
Robert Elsmere	February, 1888
The History of David Grieve	January, 1892
Marcella	April, 1894
The Story of Bessie Costrell	July, 1895
Sir George Tressady	September, 1896
Helbeck of Bannisdale	June, 1898
Eleanor	November, 1900
Lady Rose's Daughter	March, 1903
The Marriage of William Ashe	February, 1905
Fenwick's Career	May, 1906
The Testing of Diana Mallory	September, 1908
Daphne, or Marriage à la Mode	May, 1909
Canadian Born	April, 1910
The Case of Richard Meynell	October, 1911
The Mating of Lydia	March, 1913
The Coryston Family	October, 1913
Delia Blanchflower	January, 1915
Eltham House	October, 1915
A Great Success	March, 1916
England's Effort	June, 1916
Lady Connie	November, 1916
Towards the Goal	June, 1917
Missing	October, 1917
A Writer's Recollections	October, 1918
The War and Elizabeth	November, 1918
Fields of Victory	July, 1919
Cousin Philip	November, 1919
Harvest	April, 1920

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